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THE THREE SISTERS.

BY P. PEPPERCORN.

Spring with her dewy fingers touched,
Upon the mountain side,
The budding dogwood tree and lo!
It donned a robe as white as snow,
Fair as the blushing bride.

Then Summer came with balmy breeze,
Her mission to fulfil,
And where she threw perfume around,
A thousand flowers sprang from the ground,
Adorning vale and hill.

When Autumn came, she gazed and said,
"The flowers are gone I see.
It grieves me to be thus bereft
Of things I prize, there's nothing left,
But falling leaves for me."

"How sad it is to live alone,
With none to love," she sighed,
"I dread stern Winter's chilling blast,"
With breaking heart her blood she cast
Upon the leaves, and died.

LADY LINTON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE," "BARBARA GRAHAM," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.—[CONTINUED.]

"I'D rather anything happen than that," I said.

He looked at me most strangely for a moment—with a kind of violence, as it seemed to me; then his aspect softened, and he said—

"You don't know what an unlucky beggar I am, Gertie. Do you believe in the 'evil eye'?"

"No."

"I do. The best thing that can happen to my friends is to see me no more."

"That is why you tried to get rid of me so quickly this morning?" said I.

"Perhaps. No good can come of our being friends, but a good deal of harm. Well, that's settled!" he cried, with a change of tone.

"We will put into Yarmouth, and you'll forsake that absurd notion of going to London."

"No," said I; "I would go to London, if only to execute the fulfilment of your threat. I don't want to say 'good-bye for ever' to you."

The tears came into my eyes as I thought of this possibility; for in this short space of time I had come to like John Brown very much—perhaps because he filled that aching space in my heart which had been filled by the friends I left behind me at Neufbourg.

It was like parting with them all over again to think of seeing John Brown no more.

But I was angry with myself for showing this emotion; and, stamping my foot pettishly, I cried—

"It is nonsense to believe in superstitions of that sort! You are as wrong as the poor peasants you laughed at yesterday, and without their excuse. It is quite unreasonable to suppose that you can bring harm to your friends involuntarily; for it is only by doing wrong you can harm them."

"But if one can't always do right, Gertie?" he said, with a mingling of tenderness and pleasantry in his voice.

"It is only feeble persons—women and children and sick persons—who cannot control their will. You," said I, looking at him, and wondering at his size and strength—"you should be able to do just what you please."

"Then it will please me to leave you at Yarmouth and take your book over to London."

"Mere Lucas must go back to her own family."

"She can be replaced."

"You have doubts about papa's book being accepted—you said so."

"For the sake of argument, I'll undertake that the book shall be produced and you well paid for it."

"At your own risk? Tell me—is not that your intention?"

"That is my intention if the publishers are so foolish as to lose the opportunity of making money by it. I have ventured upon speculation a thousand times more hazardous than this."

When I could bring myself to speak.

"I don't know how to thank you for your goodness. I didn't think I should find such a friend so quickly, and my surprise and pleasure make a little fool of me," I said, turning away my head and dashing the stupid tears out of my eyes with my handkerchief.

I got the better of my feelings very quickly; and then I said, as calmly as I could—

"But I will go to London and abide by the result. I went through all this when I decided to refuse the assistance of my friends over there. I don't want to be your pensioner. If the book is worth nothing, I must find some other means of earning a living. You wouldn't have me your dependant, would you?"

He did not respond directly: but, after a little consideration, he said—

"I suppose I should be sorry if you consented; so to London you shall go, you brave, right-thinking, obstinate, good little person!"

* * * * * *

"So to London you shall go, you brave, right-thinking, obstinate, good little person!"

What has happened since John Brown said that to me?

I can hardly tell distinctly, because of the multiplicity of things that have in turns occupied my mind.

I remember, that when he had seated me in the railway-carriage, John Brown went to get my ticket, and I began to think how I should say good-bye to him, and that I had great ado to keep my tears down, though the words were yet unspoken.

He came back, and took the seat opposite to me.

I could say nothing for watching the hand of the clock that was creeping towards the minute when he must get out and leave me.

"A minute and a half," said I.

"The guard will blow his whistle just before starting."

Then I sat and listened for the sound, with great pain in my heart.

Presently the guard whistled, and, holding out my hand, I tried to say good-bye, and could not.

"Why, you dear little goose," he cried, "do you think I'm going to let you find your way to London alone?"

At that moment the train moved, and, finding that he was really going with me I was so moved with delight and gratitude that I caught hold of his hand with both mine, wanting to lift it to my lips and kiss it. And I remember how we went about London in a cab, looking for an apartment, which I think is the most delightful thing in the world—the cab, I mean.

But the whirl and hurry of everything confused my ideas; and certainly I must have lost myself completely had I attempted to find lodgings alone.

I should have taken the first one we looked at, but it did not satisfy John Brown; and I believe we looked at a dozen before he decided that this might suit me.

It is in the corner of a square, on the third floor.

There is a little circular enclosure of trees in the centre; but the trees are very dirty and unhappy-looking, and there are no birds in them save sparrows.

One thing this bustle and confusion did which I am gratified for—it prevented my taking deeply to heart the final parting with John Brown.

I had so much else to think of.

He promised to come and see me; and, oh, how I look for his coming!

I am sure he will keep his promise, despite what he said about the advisability of our separating entirely.

Every time the postman comes into the square I watch him, hoping he will bring me a letter from my dear friend.

He did not promise to write, but I cannot help hoping and expecting that he will.

I received a letter from Mere Lucas on Friday.

She got home quite safely and very quickly; and she says that John Brown was very kind to her.

It is odd that, in writing an account of what has happened to me since I left Neufbourg, I have so forgotten what concerns my dear old bonne; I suppose my ideas are still unsettled by the tumult of the wonderful city.

I have written a long, long letter to her, and to my old friends at Neufbourg.

On the day after my arrival the landlady's daughter took me to the street where the Anthropologist was published: it was strange to see how that child went composedly through the crowded streets while I was like one dazed.

It seemed as though I was the child and she the woman.

But I found that another magazine is now published at the office, and the Anthropologist, I was told, is dead.

So there was no possibility of getting advice from the editor.

Thence I went to Mr. X., the publisher, and, as clearly as I could, told him the object of my visit.

He promised to look at the book and give me an answer on Wednesday.

On that day I went to him and learnt that the dictionary is rather "out of his line," but that it would suit Messrs. A. & Co.

So to them I went with the same story I had given to Mr. X.

The gentleman told me to go on Saturday for his reply; and yesterday I called upon him, to learn that it was not exactly in his way, but would most likely be taken by Mr. X.!

When I told him that Mr. X. had sent me to him, he said I might try Mr. Z., in whose hands I yesterday left the volumes of MS.

But my heart sinks as I think of the result of his consideration; and it seems to me quite clear now that John Brown perceived that the work was unsalable.

Each of the three publishers said they would print the book if I would take the the risk; but all looked grave when they heard I had no money. I wish I knew the worst. It is very dull here.

I spend the morning at the British Museum; but that does not delight me as it should; and I fear I am a great dunce, and very dull to what is beautiful in antiquities.

I ought to be quite happy in looking at the beautiful statues and the broken earthenware, and find endless amusement in the instructive collections; but I wander about, and half the time my eyes are fixed upon the fossils I am thinking of the sea and recollecting my two days in the Tub, and the bright dancing waves and the sunlight; and the sea-birds sweeping above the rocks come between my eyes and the fossils.

I spend a good deal of time in the Egyptian department; there is a mummy which fascinates me.

I suppose I look stupid, for I have remarked that every one stare at me, especially the gentlemen.

Some follow me about as if they thought I was one of the curiosities of the museum. The young men have an unpleasant trick of going to the opposite side of the case I am examining and looking through it at me.

Sometimes the attendants follow me and watch me as if I was there with some wrong purpose.

I think I should like the museum if any one could explain the things to me kindly. How pleasantly John Brown would talk about them!

There seemed to be nothing in the sea or heavens about which he had not something agreeable to say.

I dare not go farther from the square than the museum without Katie, my landlady's daughter.

I do not like to ask favors of Mrs. Thompson.

She was very kind the first few days, but has been extremely uncivil and brusque since Wednesday.

I have done nothing, to my knowledge, to offend her.

So I stop at home a good deal, and read and write best part of the day.

This morning I thought for the first time of my neglected diary—how it came to be forgotten so long I cannot tell—and I have spent the whole day in writing the events of the past eleven days, with such pleasure as I have not experienced since John Brown and I were sitting together in the cab.

I am quite tired with writing—and sad too.

June 27, 188-.

This has been a day of passionate anger and bitter humiliation for me.

In the morning, when I rang the bell for Katie to take away my breakfast things, Mrs. Thompson came up, and having closed the door, said she would thank me to suit myself with another lodging by the end of the week.

I could see by her face that she was in an ill-temper—indeed I had heard her quarrelling fiercely with her husband before he went to the office, where he is engaged during the day as a clerk, and, peeping over the balusters, I had caught sight of the librarian's wife on the second floor, and the artist who uses the first floor as a studio, out on the landings listening to the storm below.

But I saw no reason why her ill-temper should be the cause of my going, and I asked for an explanation.

She was evidently only waiting for that opportunity, and at once made a charge against me which fairly bewildered me.

For some time I could not realise what she meant or believe that we were both in our second senses.

She accused me of "carrying on"—that was her expression—with her husband! If she had not been so fearfully in earnest, I think I should have laughed at this charge, for I certainly have never given two thoughts to Mr. Thompson; and he is the last man in the world I should be likely to fall in love with, even if he were single, for he is a most miserable, thin, ugly man, and has a way of looking out of the corners of his eyes in a sly cowardly manner that would make any girl dislike him, I should think.

She told me that she had had her suspicions from the first, as he had been a deal too kind in saving her the trouble of running up and down stairs, and that yesterday convinced her, as I had not been out of the house the whole day, and Thompson had done nothing from morning till night but up-stairs into the attics under some pretext or another.

She said also that Mrs. Flick had complained of my "going on" with her husband and Mr. Travers the artist.

I have observed that, whenever I go

down-stairs, Mr. Travers's door is open, and he is in sight.

He has nodded to me, and, being his neighbor, as it were, I have thought it proper to bow in return.

What else could I do?

But, as to Mr. Flick I declare I have seen him only once, when he was with his wife; and a very feeble, ailing old gentleman he looked.

I do not remember to have done anything even carelessly to provoke the jealousy of these two women.

The more Thompson talked the more angry she grew.

Finally she said that it was easy to see what kind of person I was by my having no employment and living on a third floor, and that if everything was known, she would dare to say that Thompson was not the only married man I was leading to destruction; that she had always borne a reputation for respectability, and did not intend to lose it and get her houseas bad name for ten shillings a week—the price I paid for my two rooms.

There appears to me now something ridiculous in this woman's charge; but at the time it provoked my indignation to such a degree that, had she said another word or remained in the room after I bade her leave it, I should have taken her by the shoulders and shaken her.

I put on my bonnet at once, and, trembling with excitement, went out to find another apartment.

By good torture I found one not many doors away, on the adjacent side of the square, in a house kept by a widow, who sympathized heartily with me, laughed heartily at Mrs. Thompson, and assured me I ran no risk of exciting the jealousy of any married lady in her house, as she took only single lodgers.

I then returned to my first apartments and packed my boxes.

After that, I wrote my new address on a card, and, having paid Mrs. Thompson the week's rent she demanded, I gave her the card, instructing her to give it to Mr. Brown if he called.

She took it without saying a word, being now as reticent as previously she had been voluble.

But I do not think she will trouble herself, to take care of it, or be just enough to give it to John Brown when he comes; and this possibility I had in view when I took my new apartment, and for that reason would have none but a room from which I could see the door of Mrs. Thompson's house.

I have been sitting at the window all day.

I dare scarcely leave it for a minute, lest he should come in my absence.

And now, though it is dark, and there is little possibility of his arriving to-day, I cannot hear the sound of wheels or of a knock at a distant door without going to peep across at the house I have left.

June 28.

Another long day gone, and he has not come.

I begin to feel the sickness of hope deferred, and with that a painful foreboding that I shall see John Brown no more.

It has been raining all day, and everything looks sad and miserable, and just in harmony with my feelings.

I have been thinking what I might do to earn money if papa's book is refused; and the consciousness of my inability to do anything especially well has helped to depress me.

It is hard to believe that any one could be gay in London on such a day as this, when there is not a single bright thing to be seen.

It seems to rain smuts.

The cuffs and collar I put on this morning are not fit to put on to-morrow.

I might have worn them a week at Neufbourg, and still found them clean.

There is a lady lives down-stairs and another over my head, and they were both singing this afternoon as though they found this the pleasantest place in the world.

My own trouble makes me so miserably selfish that their gaiety is more painful to my ears than silence.

I cannot fix my attention on a book—I cannot forget when I work—I can do nothing with satisfaction, and I am angry with myself.

June 29.

I received a visit from Miss Drelincourt, the lady who lives on the first floor, this morning.

She is a very handsome young woman, with particularly dark eyebrows and red lips and beautiful soft fair hair, cut short like a boy's.

She came in, after tapping at the door, and, having looked hard at me for a moment, she crossed the room with a good-natured smile and kissed me.

"I've come to cheer you up a bit, dear," she. "Don't be astonished—there's no harm in me. I hate all ceremony. The widow"—that was our landlady—"told me you were down on your luck, and did nothing but sit at the window moping over a book; so I thought I had better come and talk to you than go up-stairs to Kitty Burnes, who, I shouldn't wonder, isn't awake yet. One must talk to some one, you know. Which is the broken chair?"

I told her the chair in the corner had a leg that came out.

"There always is a lame chair in lodgings," she explained, with a laugh; "and I take precious good care to find him out before I attempt to seat myself!"

I had resumed my place by the window, not to lose sight of the house in the corner of the square; and she seated herself opposite to me before it entered my head to ask her.

She wore a pink silk dressing-gown rather the worse for wear, scarlet silk stockings, and a pair of decidedly dirty-blue kid shoes, which she was at no pains to conceal for, perfectly unconstrained, she leaned back in her chair with her hands clasped over her knee, moving her foot with a little swinging motion that kept one shoe dangling from the toe-part.

"What awful weather!" she began.

I noticed that she employed the strangest adjectives to express her feelings.

"It's enough to give any one the blues. Kitty and me got wet through last night coming home from the theatre. Not a cab to be had, let alone a 'bus! If it don't hold up, I shall book a two-wheeler to fetch me. It won't run to that every night you know."

"You go often to the theatre?" I ventured to say.

"Rather! I'm a pro., don't you know! So's Kitty. I'm at the Gaiety; she's at the Globe. You'll like her; she's just one of your sort—very, but as quiet as a mouse. You'd never think she could go on the stage to see her off it. But it isn't the rackety ones who have the most courage. Look at me, you'd think I was bold enough for anything, wouldn't you? Well, I was ready to drop through the boards the first time I sneaked on in a back row!"

"It must be very pleasant to be an actress when one has ability and courage as well."

"Oh, it's a jolly life, whatever people say! And I don't know what girl would stick in a milliner's shop if she could get on at a theatre.

"I was at a milliner's in Regent Street once. Kitty was in a bar. There you are, don't you know! You'd never think such a genteel girl would go in a bar. You'll be astonished. She's just as ladylike as you to look at."

"I don't see why an actress should not be a lady," I said, feeling a little annoyed. Then, to turn the subject, I asked Miss Drelincourt if she played in Shakspeare's plays.

"Not much," she replied, with considerable emphasis.

"Only occasionally?" I suggested.

She burst out laughing.

"Fancy me doing the heavy business!" she exclaimed. "Not me! Half a dozen speaking-lines, and any amount of chorus—that's my form!"

She talked about her profession and Kitty Burnes for some time, and then asked me if I would go with her to the theatre in the evening, promising to pass me in to see "the show" from the front, or to take me into the dressing-room, whichever pleased me.

I thanked her for her kindness—indeed, despite a certain degree of levity and, I think I may add, vulgarity, she was an agreeable and most amiable girl—and told her I could not go because I expected a visitor.

"Ah," said she, "I know all about that! Speony Travers told me. That woman's mad, I believe. When Travers and I were on nodding terms, she came here and kicked up no end of a row because she had caught her husband spending his Sunday at the attic window.

"A little insignificant wretch! I wouldn't look at him through the wrong end of an opera-glass!

"You're right in looking out for your friend, for of course Mrs. Thompson won't tell him where you are. You think he'll come; do you dear?"

"I hope so."

"Oh, of course! One always does hope as long as possible. Don't you know where he lives?"

"I think he lives in his ship."

"He's a sailor?"

"Not an ordinary sailor. The ship belongs to him, and I think he sails in it for pleasure."

"Pity to lose him," she said reflectively. "What shall you do if he don't come, dear?"

"I hardly know. I think I shall have to find some employment. I scarcely know what I can do. I have no special talent."

"Then I should advise you to try the stage. They don't bother much about talent so long as you're pretty and have some sort of a voice. I'll get you on, I know. You can come into our dressing-room first of all and see how you like the girls. I'll do all I can to make it easy for you."

"That's very, very good of you," said I.

"Come with me to-night. We'll have a cab from the door."

"No, no. My friend promised he would come."

"Oh, they'll promise anything, my dear! But they forget the promises, or think better of 'em as soon as you're out of sight."

"I am sure he will keep his promise," I said quickly.

"Well, I hope he will, for that will show he is better than most men. If he does—you take my advice—coax him to take you with him."

I do not know whether she intended what her words conveyed to my mind at that moment.

She said she meant no harm when I asked her angrily to explain what she meant by that advice.

She turned the subject awkwardly, seeing how uncomfortable she had made me, and soon after left me.

And I have seen nothing of her nor of her friend Miss Burnes since, though I heard their voices humming an hour afterwards in the room overhead.

When the humming sound of their voices ceased, I did not hear Miss Drelincourt's foot upon the stairs; and now they are gone to the theatre. I can scarcely see to write.

I must light my lamp, and cease to hope —

He has come!

I am too happy to write more than that to-night.

I want to think.

CHAPTER VI.

LADY LINTON'S DIARY CONTINUED.

JULY 5.

I have five days to write about, for my happiness has been so great that I have been quite unable to compose my thoughts into words.

In the middle of this sentence I heard the sound of wheels.

A cab ran along the farther side of the square and stopped before Mrs. Thompson's door.

I stood up and strained my eyes to see who came.

In those minutes of suspense I do not think I drew a single breath.

The doors were thrown open with a clatter, and he stepped out.

There was no mistaking his great manly figure and fair beard.

For a minute after I could not move—my legs shook under me, I had to cling to the curtains for support.

I felt as if in a terrible dream, where one sees a beloved soul in imminent peril without having the power to stretch out a helping hand.

The cab turned round and moved away slowly, and I saw John Brown ascend the steps and lift the knocker.

The sound of it seemed to awaken me; and, with a cry of terror lest he should be gone before I reached it, I flew out of the room and down the stairs.

I did not understand the fastenings of the street door, and for another minute I stood in inexpressible excitement wrenching at the handles and bolts one after another.

The landlady came, wondering, I dare say, at my frenzy.

I do not know what I said to her; but, after a moment or two of delay, she opened the door with a touch, and I ran into the road and through the drizzling rain without covering.

I heard Mrs. Thompson's door close with a sharp bang, and I saw John Brown thrust his hands into his pockets and turn about in perplexity.

"I am here, I am here!" I cried; and the next moment I rushed up to him, gasping and sobbing with emotion.

I think I must have fallen if he had not held me with his strong hands.

"Where have you sprung from, you poor little thing?" he asked.

I pointed across the square to where my landlady stood looking across at us.

"Take my arm, like a sensible young woman," he said.

And I obeyed, and we walked so to my new apartments.

And there I fell to laughing and chatting like a mad thing; and I broke my lamp-glass in a clumsy attempt to put it on after John Brown had lighted the wick with a wax-vesta.

I got my bed-room candle and lit that; and I was ashamed of the miserable light and the broken glass on the floor, and my wild untidy look.

He said very little, but he never took his eyes off me, I thought, and that added to confusion.

I was so afraid he would pity me. But when he spoke it was only to ask if I had dined.

"Yes, I think so," said I. "In London people dine at one o'clock, and eat bread-and-butter about dinner-time. But, if you are hungry, I will send out for something; only my landlady is not a good cook, and there is no stove that I can use, and the chops are fried in grease, and I don't think you will like them."

"I don't think I should. Put on your bonnet, Gertie, and we will go out and find something nice to eat."

"Yes, yes!" I cried, laughing—"I cannot tell why I felt just as ready to cry. "But I don't like to leave you in the dark; and this room is so different from your cabin."

Just then the landlady came with a lamp, having "heard" me break the glass, she said, and, smiling at John Brown, asked if he would take a bottle of "hale" or some "Irish," which she always "kep' in the 'ouse."

"I will take your lamp, madam, but nothing more," said John Brown; and with that he made my landlady a bow which seemed to frighten her out of the room.

"I shall not grow impatient," he said to me when I promised I would not keep him long.

"There is a guide to the British Museum, if you would like to read something," said I.

"Thanks, dear," he said, in his tender parental tone.

It was the first time he had called me "dear," but the word made my heart leap up within me.

"What's this?" he asked turning to the quire of paper I had been writing.

"My diary—part of it. I was writing it when I heard the wheels of your cab."

"Your diary—the chronicle of your acts and thoughts. It would save a lot of explanation if I might glance over the history of the past eight or ten days."

"You may," said I. "You may do what you like."

He put his hand upon my head and stroked back the hair that had got loose and fallen over my forehead.

I could not see his face for the tears that sprang into my eyes.

He said nothing for a minute, and then—

"Run away, Gertie, and put on your bonnet."

I left him, and went into my bed-room with the intention of putting on my bonnet as he bade me, and getting back again without delay; but I found I had splashed my dress with gray mud, and covered my boots and a good deal of my stockings as well with filth in running across the square so heedlessly; wherefore I had to take off these things; and I was not ill-pleased to put on my little shoes and my best dress, though it kept me longer than I wished in my bed-room.

When I came back to my sitting-room, I found John Brown sitting where I had left him, with my diary on his knee, but his head turned towards the window.

He must have been in deep thought, for it was quite dark and there was nothing to be seen now outside.

"Ah, now you look yourself again!" he said, rising and looking at me as he heard me close my door. "I've read this. Put it away and lock it up. Are you ready to start?"

"Yes."

"How are you about the feet?"

I pulled back my skirts and showed my shoes.

He did not look in the least displeased, although they were 'young-ladyish,' in my opinion.

"There's no advantage about those shoes, Gertie—they'll keep your heels dry," he said laughing. "Can you walk in them to the other side of the square?"

"I could dance in them."

"I'm glad to hear it, with all my heart. You couldn't have danced in them or any other shoes half an hour ago, if I judge your confessions rightly. Come along; we will dance away the rest of this day, at any rate."

So we went out, I with my hand in his arm.

Upon the other side of the square we got into a delicious cab with dazzling lamps, and were whisked away amongst hundreds of other gleaming lights and hurrying cabs, and I could say nothing but "Yes" and "No" when he spoke; but I put my hand under his and kept it there just as if we had been walking along.

Then, amongst all the brilliant lights from the street-lamps and shops, I saw, for the first time, I think, that London, even on a rainy evening, is indeed a gay city and a pleasant one to be in.

We dined in the most beautiful room I have ever seen, where the tables glittered with silver and crystal, and were beautiful with flowers and hundreds of lights.

We had a little table all to ourselves, and though I could not eat much, I enjoyed the dinner exceedingly.

Afterwards we got into another cab and went to a theatre.

There I felt as if I had been transported into fairyland, for the wonders of it surpassed all imagining.

An opera was being played upon the stage—"Don Giovanni."

We were not in time for the beginning, and so I hardly know what the story was, especially as it was all in Italian, of which language I am sorry to say, I know nothing at all.

But John Brown said it was a good thing not to understand the words, for they spoilt the enjoyment of the music.

There were a solo and a trio which sent a thrill right through me and filled my heart with the most tender emotions.

I forgot everything, even John Brown, as I listened; and at the end of the trio I found that I had risen from my seat and was standing upright.

No doubt I behaved strangely in other respects without knowing it, for between the acts I saw many people looking at me through their opera-glasses, and the old gentleman who sat upon my left hand was looking at me and chuckling whenever I glanced that way.

John Brown did not take me back to the square.

"I don't intend to let you go there again," was all he said upon the subject; and, after my late experiences, I was only too willing to submit to his decision, feeling how helpless I was.

He took me to a hotel not far from the theatre, where a pleasant chambermaid led me to a handsome apartment of two rooms and a toilet-chamber, after I had said "good night" to John Brown.

When we were taking breakfast together the next morning, he said—

"Now, Gertie, let us talk about business. Tell me what you have done about the dictionary."

I told him all that the publisher's lad said to me about it, and that I ought to have gone to W. Z. on the morning before.

"And why didn't you go?" he then asked.

"Because I was afraid of losing you," I replied.

"And supposing you have lost a fortune by looking out for me?" he asked.

I thought that I would far rather lose the fortune than John Brown, and I was just about to tell him so, feeling wonderfully happy and careless, when it struck me that perhaps I ought not to let him know how much I liked him; so, after looking at him in confusion for a minute, I dropped my eyes, feeling the color rush into my face, for I did not know what to say if I could not tell the truth just as it stood in my mind.

"Well, we'll go and see W. Z. together," and find out definitely what the fate of the book is to be. Do you want anything before starting?"

"I've no tooth-brush; and I want clean cuffs and collar."

"Some one shall go with you to buy what you want, while I settle another matter of business. When that's done, we'll go to our publisher's."

The chambermaid went out with me, and, having found that John Brown really did not object to pretty things, I bought a new bonnet and a pair of lovely gloves with six buttons, and several other things which I needed.

It was fully an hour before I got back to the hotel, though how so long a space passed without knowing it I could not imagine.

"I have settled with your landlady," said John Brown, when I came down from my room; "and your boxes will be brought here this afternoon. Now, if you're ready, we'll be off. The cab's at the door."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Jealous.

BY J. C.

ENGAGED at last!

Mr. Reuben Merrifield had lived to the age of forty years without having surrendered to the tender passion.

He had made up his mind, within himself, that he was to be an old bachelor, when all of a sudden, Cupid and his bow came in his way and presto!—change!—Mr. Reuben Merrifield's future assumed altogether a different aspect.

He met Miss Ethel Parker at a private morning concert.

She sang "Annie Laurie," with her back-hair down over her shoulders, and a bewitching Highland costume.

"Marry you?" said Miss Parker, all roses and smiles, when, after the orthodox series of visits, presents, and opera tickets, Mr. Merrifield proposed, in form and ceremony.

"Dear me, I'm sure I don't know what to say. It's so sudden, you know."

"But don't you think you could learn to love me, darling?" demanded Mr. Merrifield.

"I do love you, Reuben, dear," confessed Miss Parker, hanging down her pretty head.

"Better than anybody else in this world?"

"Oh, yes, a thousand times."

Mr. Merrifield's countenance brightened.

"And are you sure you never cared for anyone before?"

"Oh, quite sure, Reuben, darling."

And then the middle-aged lover drew a glittering diamond solitaire from his vest pocket, and fitted it to the fore-finger of the pretty Ethel's left hand.

"Shall we be married in the spring, dear?" said he.

"I know it's rather soon, but I've wasted too many years in single blessedness to be willing to wait for any later time."

"Just as you say, Reuben," assented Miss Parker, with the most delightful docility.

Great was the rejoicing of Papa Parker, Mamma Parker, and the other six Parker sisters when Ethel showed her ring and told of her conquest.

For, although exceedingly genteel, the Parker family was impecunious, and such a good match for "dear Ethel" was regarded with unalloyed satisfaction.

"I suppose he's very rich, Ethel?" said Mattie, the second daughter, with a sigh, that partook the least little bit in the world of envy.

"He owns a fine house," said Ethel, with pardonable pride.

"And I'm to have a housekeeper with two servants under her, and six weeks at any watering-place I please, in the summer."

"I wish I could captivate such a darling of a man!" cried out Bertha, the third Miss Parker.

"How nice it will be, Ethel, to have new gloves for every party you go to, and never darn your dresses or wash your soiled ribbons in gum-arabic water and Castile soap!"

"There's one drawback, though," soberly confessed Ethel, turning the new ring around and around, so as to catch the sunshine on its myriad glittering facets.

"What's that?" asked Mattie and Bertha.

"I'm afraid he's a little inclined—no, I may as well speak the truth, a great deal inclined to be jealous."

"Oh, that's nothing," said Mattie. It only makes the affair more romantic."

"Yes, in books," said sage Ethel. "But not in real life!"

"You'll have to leave off flirting, that's all," counselled Bertha.

"I never did flirt. But, of course, Reuben will soon find out the folly of scolding every time I chance to look in the direction of a young man."

Alas! Ethel Parker was right.

We are all human.

The only leaven of unpleasantness in Mr. Reuben Merrifield's nature was a tendency to the "green-eyed monster."

And circumspect as the bride-elect had endeavored to be, she could not always avoid giving offence.

There was more than one scintillating little lovers' quarrel ending in reconciliation and tears—but these were trifles, Ethel thought, when the great esclandre arrived.

It was a bright March evening, when Mr. Reuben Merrifield was shown by the pink-ribboned maid into the pretty little back drawing-room, where a low, rubied fire glowed on the hearth, and the odor of Mattie's hyacinths filled the mind with pleasant anticipations of sunny spring-time.

"Miss Ethel in the front room, eh?" said Mr. Merrifield, expanding his palms over the grate.

"Needn't go to call her—I'll call her myself when I've got the frost out of my finger-joints, Betty."

"Yes, sir," said Betty, courtseying, and withdrawing.

Now dark blue satteen hangings formed a pretty partition between the two rooms, and when looped up in the middle, improvised a picturesque door.

A pretty idea, but one which came dangerously near spoiling the prospective wedding in the family, as our readers will presently hear.

The blue folds were down.

As he stood warming his hands, Reuben Merrifield could hear the voice of his fiancee.

"He's better, is he? Darling Dick, I am so glad; I love him dearly."

"He is handsome," a second feminine voice responded.

"The handsomest creature I ever saw in my life," Miss Ethel enthusiastically responded.

"It's been horribly dull since Dick went away.

"Give him a kiss for me, Winnie, won't you?"

Mr. Merrifield, who had listened to this colloquy with hair erect and eyes blazing with emerald fire, could endure no more.

Parting the curtains so that his anger-crimsoned face loomed like a full harvest moon between the soft blue folds, he cried out—

"False girl, be happy with your Dick. I don't know who he is, and I don't care; but this I know—you shall never look upon my face again."

And he rushed downstairs, three steps at a time, capsizing the cat and nearly overturning the maid.

Ethel gave a shriek.

"Reuben, dear Reuben, come back," she cried, hysterically. "Only hear me."

"Who is it, dear? Is it an escaped madman?" asked Mrs. Carver, the guest.

Mr. Merrifield wasn't quite certain, on emerging into the open air, whether he should go and drown himself or purchase strychnine.

But on sober second thought, he concluded to do neither until he had a night's sleep upon it.

"How I have been deceived in that girl," said he to himself.

"Fates and furies, what an escape I have had.

"But I shall carry a bruised and wounded heart to my grave—that is, if I don't put an end to my blighted career at once."

He was brooding darkly over his prospects, at about eight o'clock in the evening, when a knock came to the door.

"Not at home, Dobson—not at home to anybody," he cried out over the banisters.

But it was too late.

Ethel Parker was sobbing in his arms, with her two sisters, Bertha and Mattie, in the background.

"Serpent in a too fair shape," he uttered tragically, "go to your Dick."

"But I can't, Reuben, dearest," whimpered Ethel. "Dick is a canary bird."

"A canary bird!"

"Yes, Reuben, nothing on earth but my canary bird.

"He has been sick, and Mrs. Carver has been keeping him for me.

"You won't be jealous of my poor little canary, Reuben, will you?"

And then Mr. Merrifield was glad that he had not drowned himself, or made the use of a stomach pump necessary with strychnine or laudanum.

He looked a little foolish, but not half so foolish as he felt.

"Give me a kiss, Ethel," said he. "No, I'll not be jealous."

And the wedding took place, after all, in spite of "Dick."

The Telegram.

BY F. C. B.

"MRS. SMITH, I am astonished at you!"

John Smith was "astonished" at his wife at least once a day, on an average.

Mrs Smith was used to it.

She was a tall, slight woman, scarcely more than a girl in years, with cheeks that had been as pink as a shells in the days of her happy maiden life.

"Things are all at sixes and sevens," went on Mr. Smith, tying his cravat before the mirror, and viciously twitching it into a knot.

"Coal wasted, butter thrown into the grease jar, and my third-best coat sold to a dealer in tinware for a funnel and two pie platters.

"I never heard of anything so outrageous in my life."

"But, my dear," meekly interposed the much-enduring wife, "we needed the tinware, and you had not worn the coat for a year; it was full of moths."

"There it is again," said Mr. Smith. "The moths would never have got into it if you had taken proper precautions.

"I never heard of a moth in my mother's time.

"And now you are actually asking permission to visit your brother."

"I have not been away from home before since we were married, John," piteously pleaded Mrs. Smith.

"I feel almost worn out, and I think the change would do me good."

"And what is to become of me?" sonorously demanded the husband.

Mrs. John Smith thought of the day's excursion last week, and the trout-fishing expedition a fortnight since; but she said nothing, except—

"It don't cost much to go, John. And I'll only stay away a week.

"Do let me go! The doctor says the fresh air might help baby along with his teeth, and little Johnnie is drooping."

"Well," said Mr. Smith, as ungraciously as possible, "I suppose you'll have to go, and altogether our expenses are ruinous this year.

"See how Georgiana Trotter manages for her husband.

"I don't suppose it costs them half to live that it does us.

"I might have married Georgiana Trotter once. I almost wish I had."

It was on Mrs. Smith's lips to utter—

"So do I."

But she looked at the little children, and was silent.

"Yes," went on Mr. Smith, "I suppose you must go."

"It's his way," she thought; "he means well enough; and I suppose all men are so—only I wish he had kissed me good-bye."

Woman nature all over.

Her heart yearned hungrily for the omitted caress—the ignored word of tenderness.

Poor Mrs. John Smith!

How the strong-minded of her sex would have pitied and despised her.

It was dreary enough, on that August evening, as Mr. Smith screwed his key into the latch and groped his way in.

No light.

No fire.

He sat down in the bay window, and stared about the vacant room.

There was his wife's workbasket on the table, while Johnny's forgotten rattle lay on the floor close by.

"It's dreadful lonely!" muttered Mr. Smith with something of a shiver. "I hope Jenny won't stay long."

And as he lighted his cigar and whiffed away, a guilty sense of his own shortcomings came upon him.

"It must have been rather a stupid life for her here, poor little thing," thought he.

"I might have come home early to keep her company, many times, when I didn't. She had to sew a great deal for the children; and now I come to reflect upon the matter, Jenny has grown thin and pale of late."

He moved his chair uneasily.

"I suppose they are at Bilberry Farm by this time," said he to himself.

"I suppose the youngsters are in bed, and Jenny is sitting listening to the nightingale.

"I've almost a mind to go there myself to-morrow evening; it would be a pleasant surprise for Jenny and—hallo! what's that? A ring at the bell?"

John Smith shuffled along to the door in his slippers.

"Oh, a telegram; now I wonder who should telegraph to me."

Mr. Smith carried his buff envelope back to the parlor light, and somewhat nervously tore it open.

"TO JOHN SMITH,—Railroad accident. Your wife is killed, and your child dangerously hurt. Come by next train.

"JARED MEREDITH, M.D."

Again and again Mr. Smith's bewildered eyes roved over the contents of this appalling missive, before he could fully comprehend its deadly meaning.

"Dead! Killed!" he muttered to himself.

"My dear Jenny killed by a railroad accident?"

And then, catching a railway guide from the book-shelf, he whirled over its leaves with a trembling hand.

The next train did not leave the terminus under an hour and a half.

An hour and a half.

To him the time seemed almost like eternity.

How could he endure this awful agony of soul for an hour and a half?

"Perhaps they are incorrect," he muttered to himself, wiping the beads of cold sweat from his brow.

"People can't always judge exactly in such a moment of dismay.

"Perhaps she is only badly hurt, and I can nurse her through it, after all. My Jenny, my loving, patient, sweet-eyed wife."

A strong sob rose up into his throat, as if it would strangle him.

"No, no, she is killed!" he gasped, as his eye fell once more on the telegram.

"Dead! And I never can speak to her again, or tell her what a cruel, exacting brute I have been.

"God knows I didn't mean it, and now it is too late to make any amends.

"Why didn't the children go too? How can I bring them up without Jenny?"

His head drooped low in his quivering hands.

A low, spasmodic groan burst from his pale lips.

An hour and a half before he could get to Jenny.

Half an hour, then, before he could reach the scene of the accident, and look upon her dead face.

"If I could only live my life over again," he cried aloud to the bare walls, while tight in his arms, he clasped Jenny's little workbasket, with its strip of unfinished hemming—all that was left to him of the fair, departed presence.

"If I could only speak to her just once, and ask her forgiveness for a thousand things. But now it is too late—too late, and ——"

He stopped abruptly.

The sound of a cab driving hastily up to the door, the reiterated jerk of the bell-wire roused him once more into reluctant action.

"John! dear John!"

"Jenny! my wife!"

He stood pale and stupefied, staring at her as if she were actually a ghost returned from the regions of space and unreality.

"There has been a terrible railroad accident," said Jenny, her voice faltering, as she laid the baby down on a sofa, and took little Johnny lovingly on her lap, "a few miles beyond C——. Three or four people were killed, but, thank God! we escaped unhurt. Of course, I took the first train back that I could, for I knew you would hear of it and be uneasy. And only think, dear, there was a poor mother killed, with her little babe in her arms, and her name was the same as mine—'Mrs. John Smith.'"

He pointed one trembling finger to the telegram which lay open on the table near him.

Mrs. Smith read it with dilated eyes and pale face.

"Oh, my love, what a fright you have had!" she exclaimed. "And only to reflect it might have been me."

"But it is not. Oh! thank Heaven, my own darling wife, it is not," gasped the husband, holding his recovered treasure close to his heart; "and I have yet time to live my life over again."

And from that hour John Smith was a changed man.

Bric-a-Brac.

THEN AND NOW.—Walker's book on "Wages" states that in 1630 the government of Massachusetts fixed by law the wages of carpenters and masons at two shillings a day, or 33 cents—less than one-sixth of the present rates. Flour and grain were cheap but clothes were not. Greeley wrote that "in Vermont for five years (1821-25) the wages of men in the summer harvest were 50 cents a day. Food was cheaper, and a day's work would buy as much bread and meat as now, but of cloth, sugar and store goods, not half so much." To-day workmen with good habits and economy are better off than in those days.

MODEL MOTHERS-IN-LAW.—A Mobile mother-in-law presented her daughter's husband with a house and lot. A Massachusetts mother-in-law made a will in favor of her son's wife, and died within two weeks afterward. A Manhattan mother-in-law gives her son-in-law all the money he wants to spend. A Manassas mother-in-law never gets angry at her daughter-in-law and never tells her how to cook. A Milwaukee mother-in-law always kisses her son-in-law whenever she visits him. She thinks he likes it. A Minnesota mother-in-law sends her daughter-in-law a jug of fresh milk and a basket of eggs every day. Since she has done this her son has sold his cow and killed his chickens.

A WOULD BE CANNIBAL.—A story is told of General Koenigsmark, an officer engaged in one of the many wars waged in bygone times by Sweden against Poland and Bohemia, which illustrates both the pig-eating attribute and the fear which such an achievement may possibly produce in the minds of others. A peasant came to the King of Sweden's tent during the siege of Prague and offered to devour a large hog for the amusement of His Majesty. The General standing by, said that the fellow ought to be burned as a sorcerer. Nettled and irritated at this, the peasant exclaimed: "If Your Majesty will but make that old gentleman take off his sword and spurs I will eat him before I begin the pig," accompanying this offer with a vast expansion of mouth and jaws. Brave as he was in battle, Koenigsmark could not stand this. He beat a hasty retreat to his own quarters.

THE WOODEN HORSE.—The wooden horse of Greek and Roman Mythology was a monstrous image of a horse, made of wood and filled with Greeks, which the Trojans were induced to take into their city by the representations of Sinon, a pretended deserter from the Grecian army, who asserted that it had been constructed as an atonement for the stealing of the Palladium by Ulysses and Diomed, and that, if the Trojans should venture to destroy it, Troy would fall: but if, on the contrary, they were to draw it with their own hands into the city, they would gain the supremacy over the Greeks. Though warned by Laocoon, Calchas, and Cassandra, that he was an impostor the Trojans took the advice of Sinon, and drew the horse within the walls. In the night, Sinon stole forth and unlocked a concealed door in the horse, and the Greeks, rushing out, opened the city gates to their friends waiting without, who poured in, and thus gained possession of Troy.

BIRD AND DOG.—A few years ago a gentleman took a young raven from its nest, and kept it in an outbuilding for some months; its wings were then clipped and it was allowed to go at large. It soon became well known for a mile around, regularly visiting every farm-house within that distance whenever a pig was killed, when it was always rewarded with some tit bits. A coaching inn had one that would frequently take short jaunts out on the coach top, until he met some other coach driver he also knew passing in a homeward direction, he would immediately change coaches and return. This bird was known as Ralph. Ralph's friend, a dog, in course of time had the misfortune to break his leg, and during the long period of his confinement the raven waited on him constantly, carried him his provisions and scarcely ever left him alone. One night, by accident, the stable door had been shut, and Ralph had been deprived of his friend's company all night; but the hostler found, in the morning, the door so pecked away, that had it not been opened, in another hour Ralph would have made his own entrance.

ASHES.

BY ADORA ROBERTS.

Farewell, since fate with cruel hands
Has rent our souls apart
And broke with ruthlessness the bands
Which joined us one in heart;
Since hatred has with baleful blight,
Usurped Love from his throne,
And robbed fair Eden of delight
Where faith, and trust, has flown.

Farewell, I will not curse the hour
Whose passing was so sweet,
Nor rail, that love's once fragrant flower
Lies scentless at our feet.
Although my sunshine, warm and bright,
Is now by clouds o'ercast,
And though I shiver in the night
Which swept our morning past,

Yet will I feel as life moves on
The rapture of the time
When faith was in unclouded dawn
Unstained by doubt's foul slime.
And though 'twas but a holiday
Which brought no peace or rest,
And through its hopes are flown away
God's will, we know is best.

Thorns and Blossoms

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BLACK VEIL," "HER MOTHER'S CRIME," "A BROKEN WEDDING-RING," "MABEL MAY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.—[CONTINUED.]

BITTER, angry thoughts filled her mind.

She did not think much of herself, of whither she was going, of what she should do.

She was too angry.

Never again, she vowed to herself, would she look upon the faces of those she had left.

She would annul her marriage by going far away.

Never would she submit again to the insolent pride of Lady Ryvers.

Never again would she look into the face of the man who had brought all these troubles upon her.

She left behind her all the rich paraphernalia of dress, jewels, and ornaments that her husband had lavished upon her.

Not one of them would she touch.

She dressed herself plainly, and she left the grand old mansion on foot, heedless enough as to whither she was going.

It had occurred to her that the money in her purse was her husband's, she would have left that behind her also.

She forgot all about it.

She had some vague idea of going back to St. Ryno's.

Miss Atherton's wrath would be hard to bear, but it would not be so hard as Lady Ryvers' insolence.

Of all that she was giving up she never thought.

The luxury and magnificence had grown hateful to her, because they were accompanied by insolence and unkindness.

Perhaps, had she met with kindness and affection instead of cruelty, she might have enjoyed the splendor of Ryverswell; as it was, she never gave it a thought.

She was hurrying from all that she hated angry and indignant, scornful and contemptuous.

When she reached the station, the London train was just starting.

She had no object in going to London; to get away quickly, to leave Ryverswell, with all its associations, was her prevailing idea.

She took a ticket for London.

Her heart had not ceased its angry beating, every pulse was thrilling with the memory of the insult she had received.

The train stopped at London Bridge.

The accidental taking of that ticket was to be the very turning-point of her life.

She owned afterwards that it was very strange.

If the train had happend to be going to Liverpool or Glasgow, she would have taken a ticket quite as readily to either.

The train stopped at London Bridge, and the first person she saw, as she left the carriage, was Mrs. Carstone.

Immeasurable was that lady's delight, while to Violet it seemed as though the clouds had suddenly opened and a gleam of light appeared in the darkness.

Perhaps, had Violet been less hotly indignant, she might have thought twice before she poured out her list of grievances to Mrs. Carstone.

She was too angry to think.

"I have left them forever," she declared. "I wish never to see them again."

"But, my dear," said Mrs. Carstone, perplexed, "it does not seem to me that your husband is to blame."

"He alone is to blame," she replied. "He should have told me the truth, and then left me to please myself when I knew it. I shall annul my own marriage."

"You cannot do that," said Mrs. Carstone with a smile at the girl's simplicity.

"I can do it just as well as any one else," she replied.

"My dear, you had better go home with me," Mrs. Carstone said quite suddenly. "My husband and son have gone to Italy again; I did not care to accompany them on this occasion.

"Come home with me for a time; I am all alone."

And Violet went, little forseeing all that was to arise from that invitation, or the great events that were to spring from so slight a cause.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"LOOK," said Violet—and she held out a thin white hand to Mrs. Carstone—"you see I have done it myself.

"If a judge and jury, or whoever tries such cases, can say that I am not married, I can say so myself."

The hand she held out had no wedding-ring on it.

She had removed it, and seemed to consider that she had by that means in some degree released herself.

"My dear Violet," said the kindly mistress of Ingleshaw, "how foolish you are! Nothing so trifling can undo a marriage."

"I used to think so," replied Violet; "but, if Lady Ryvers, with her lawyers and Queen's Counsel, can manage it, why should not I?"

"I wish you would think differently of your husband," said Mrs. Carstone.

"I do not wonder that you should be very angry with the dowager Lady Ryvers; but I see no cause for anger against her son."

On every point visitor and hostess agreed except this one.

Mrs. Carstone admired Lord Ryvers very much, and, could not see that he had done wrong.

Against his mother, for acting what she felt to be a cruel part, she was not indignant.

The young husband, who seemed to adore his beautiful wife, was blameless in her eyes.

It was a happy accident by which Violet had met Mrs. Carstone.

"Where should you have gone and what should you have done," asked Mrs. Carstone, "if we had not met?"

"I cannot tell," she replied. "I am thankful to Heaven that I met you, Mrs. Carstone; I could not have found a kinder friend."

"I shall never rest," declared the older lady, "until we are friends again with that handsome young husband of yours.

"I shall never forget the way in which he watched you always."

"He has looked his last on me," said Violet.

She had refused to be called "Lady Ryvers."

She would not hear the name.

"My husband's mother wished to deprive me of it," she said scornfully; "I will give it up now of my own free will.

"I will be Violet Beaton for the rest of my life."

"You are a very wilful Violet," remarked Mrs. Carstone, "and some day you will most surely be sorry for the way in which you have given up your husband."

The mistress of Ingleshaw was much amused when she saw how untiringly Violet pored over the newspapers.

She, who had barely heard the word "divorce," now read most of the divorce reports which appeared in the newspapers; but amongst them all there was no dispute between husband and wife like her own.

These days at Ingleshaw were not altogether unpleasant.

"How little I dreamed," said Violet to Mrs. Carstone one morning, "that I should ever seek a refuge with you!

"How we talked about Ingleshaw! How I wondered where you would find room for all things Mr. Carstone and Mr. Oscar bought!

"Now they do not seem so many, because your place is so large."

Mrs. Carstone was very proud of her beautiful home.

It was strange that Violet, who had so deeply resented the dowager Lady Ryvers's pride in Ryverswell, never grew angry with her hostess.

She declined with haughty pride to examine the family treasures at Ryverswell.

She did not care to see the silver goblet from which Queen Elizabeth had drunk.

She did not care for the old silver candlestick used by Marie Stuart.

She would not even look at an old missal that had belonged to the Merrie Monarch.

These things had no value in her eyes; but, when Mrs. Carstone took her to see the various treasures of Ingleshaw, she was delighted with them—she, who had been so impatient with the pride and hauteur of Lady Ryvers, simply laughed at the pride of Mrs. Carstone.

The days passed pleasantly because she could forget all about Ryverswell.

Mrs. Carstone was an excellent hostess; her one idea was to make Violet happy.

No one knew her; she was always addressed as Miss Beaton.

She was much beloved by all the household.

Her beautiful face won their hearts.

Her manner was so kind and gentle; they wished madam had such a daughter; they wished their young master would bring home such a wife.

While the hot resentment and anger burned in Violet's heart, no softening thought of her husband came to her—she did not miss his love, his caresses, his attentions.

But, after a time, she grew restless—nothing more than that—restless in body and mind.

She could not remain very long in one place.

She wandered from the room, from house to grounds, from field to forest.

She wandered on the terraces, in the picture-galleries.

There was never any peace or rest on her beautiful face.

It was the the same with all her employments.

If she sat down to the piano, she rose in a few minutes to find a book.

If she took a volume, and Mrs. Carstone thought she was going to read, the book would be laid down or exchanged for something else.

"Is it her heart or her conscience?" the kindly lady asked herself.

She could not possibly think she had done right; yet she seemed to be upheld by some lofty sense of pride.

"Do you never think about your husband?" Mrs. Carstone asked her one night.

"Yes, of course I do," she replied.

"Do you miss him?" her friend pursued.

"I do not wish to speak about him," Violet answered quietly.

"He must be very unhappy," said Mrs. Carstone; "he loved you so dearly. And he does not even know where you are. He must be in great suspense and distress."

"I wish," cried Violet impatiently, "you would not talk about him!

"Do let me forget him; you give me no chance. You mean most kindly, I know; but it irritates me."

"Because, my dear," said Mrs. Carstone, with great complacency, "your conscience is not at ease."

When she was alone, Violet began to reflect on those words.

Was Randolph miserable?

Was he in suspense?

Was he always thinking of her and wondering where she was?

Something seemed to rise in her heart and plead for him, but she would not listen to it.

What if he had loved her with love passing the love of man?

What if he had been willing to give up the whole world for her?

What if he had surrounded her with loving care and sweet observances?

In her anger against him she would not remember these things.

He had deceived her, and he had brought the great shame of her life upon her.

She hardened her heart against him; she would not remember his care and his love. He had forfeited all right to her affection. She did not understand enough of human nature to be quite sure that the very pique of her anger must have had its source in love.

Nothing would have pleased Mrs. Carstone better than to keep Violet with her always.

When they had spent three weeks together, a letter came announcing the return in a few weeks of the two gentlemen of the house.

Then Violet need to realize her position, and shrank from meeting them.

"I cannot stay here when they are at home," she said; "I should not like it. Dear Mrs. Carstone, teach me what to do; I must work for myself."

And she was deaf to any other suggestion.

In vain Mrs. Carstone implore her to stay at Ingleshaw, assuring her that both husband and son would be delighted."

"I know it," she replied. "They would be pleased; they would be kind, as you are; but I should prefer to leave here. My husband was just the least in the world jealous of Mr. Oscar, and he would not like it."

"But you have given him up," said Mrs. Carstone; "you have made up your mind never to see him again."

"Still I should not like to do anything of which he would not approve," answered Violet earnestly—so earnestly that Mrs. Carstone smiled to herself, and felt more hopeful of a reconciliation than she had yet.

"I must work for myself," the girl continued.

"I should have been compelled to do so if I had not met my husband. There is no great hardship in doing it now."

"Perhaps Lord Ryvers may not like it," said Mrs. Carstone. "To my mind, that seems much worse than living with us."

"He worked himself—worked hard at painting," she replied. "I must do something.

"Even if I could, I would not live on your charity, Mrs. Carstone."

"You should not, my dear. If you will remain with me as my companion, I will pay you just the same as any one else, neither more nor less, and I will be very kind to you."

"I know that; but it would not do. I am quite sure that, if ever it came to my husband's knowledge, he would not approve of it.

"Help me in another fashion, dear Mrs. Carstone. Try to find a situation for me. I could not teach—I do not know enough: but I should make a good companion. Will you use your influence to find me such a situation as that?"

"Do you really mean it?" asked Mrs. Carstone, looking at her.

"I do indeed," Violet assured her.

"Then you may consider the situation as already secured, as Mrs. Beresford, who called here yesterday, told me that she had been asked by a friend of hers, who has been a companion and who is giving up the situation to find a successor."

"What a strange thing!" said Violet, never guessing that it was the pointing of the finger of Fate.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VIOLET had little difficulty in obtaining the situation to which Mrs. Carstone had referred.

Mrs. Beresford made all the necessary arrangements for her, and it was settled that she was to go to Queen's Elm in the following week.

She had resumed her maiden name; she would not hide under any alias.

Just as she had taken off her wedding-ring and placed it away, so now she laid aside the name that she disliked and resumed that of her parents.

The dowager and her children wanted to annul her marriage, and they should be gratified; she would annul it herself.

Deep down in her heart lay the firm conviction that no human power could undo a marriage, that it could be dissolved only by death; but, if the dowager and her children liked to speak of marriage as though it were a ceremony to be set aside at will and pleasure, let them.

She would adopt the same view, and so free herself.

Mrs. Carstone listened, as she did to everything Violet said, with a smile.

She made no further attempt to argue, to remonstrate, or to interfere.

She had begun to realize that time was the only thing which would bring matters right, and in silence she agreed to all Violet's whims.

She said nothing about the wedding-ring that lay in the drawer upstairs.

Dearly as she delighted to speak of a grand acquaintance, she carefully refrained from mentioning the fact that the young Lady Ryvers of Ryverswell was staying with her.

She did all she could to further Violet's views and intentions.

She told her to make what use she would of her name, that she would be only too pleased to be a reference for her.

"But you will soon tire of the position you have chosen to fill," she said. "A few months will show you how different it is from that which you have hitherto occupied and you will be ready to forgive even the dowager Lady Ryvers by that time."

"I will never forgive her while I live," said Violet passionately; "and I would rather die of hunger than go back to her."

"Nevertheless you are going amongst aristocrats again," remarked Mrs. Carstone quietly.

Violet looked slightly perplexed.

"It will not be forever," she said. "I shall work my way back to my own class in time."

The situation promised well.

Violet was to act as companion to an elderly lady, Mrs. Ingram of Queen's Elm, who had long lost her husband, and wanted some one to be constantly with her.

She had neither sons nor daughters living only one grandchild.

Of this grandchild Mrs. Beresford knew nothing, except that she was very beautiful, and would be a great heiress, as all the accumulated wealth of the Ingram family would be hers.

The granddaughter, heiress and beauty though she was, did not enter much into Violet's conditions.

She did not spend much time at Queen's Elm, and would have nothing to do with her.

Insensibly she grew interested in Mrs. Beresford's account of Queen's Elm, one of the oldest manorial houses in the land, and which took its name from the fact of its having once been the residence of Queen Philippa of Hainault.

From the number of elms about it the place had taken its name.

They also gave the name to the pretty country town of Elm Green, which lay at a distance of five miles from the old manor house.

The scenery was very beautiful; there were deep streams, green hills crowned with trees, fertile meadows, and fruit-laden orchards.

It was the end of September when Violet reached Queen's Elm.

She had been fiercely independent up to the very last.

She had refused any assistance from Mrs. Carstone; she refused any escort, laughed at the idea, and seemed to take the keenest delight in ignoring every aristocratic tradition.

The only thing was to let her take her own way—and that Violet did.

She reached Queen's Elm on a fine September evening, when the old place was all aglow in the sunset, and as her eyes fell on it she wondered if, after all, there was not some merit in antiquity.

Surely nothing could be more lovely than the fine old house, the gray stone almost covered with ivy, the growth of centuries.

It was worth a whole mile of modern palaces all gilding and stucco; no money, no art could impart that air of antiquity. And, in spite of herself, in spite of all the ideas that had been instilled into her, she found herself wondering whether it were the same thing with men as with houses—whether there was as much difference between an aristocrat and a parvenu as between an old house the home of many centuries and one built in the most modern style.

And there came to her mind, as the thought occurred to her, the recollection of two men, perfect types of each—Oscar Carstone the parvenu, the son of the "self-made man," with the outward polish and manner of a gentleman, and her husband, Lord Ryvers, with innate nobility in every thought and word.

For the first time in her life she paused to think if it were possible that the training of Aunt Alice could have been a wrong or mistaken one.

Then the memory of all she had suffered at Ryverswell came to her, and once more her heart burned with hatred towards the class she had been taught to despise.

When Violet arrived at Queen's Elm, she was ushered at once into the presence of Mrs. Ingram.

She found her very old and feeble, but dignified and slightly haughty in manner.

She was sitting in a large old-fashioned drawing-room, dressed in a thick rich black brocade, with point-lace at her throat and round her wrists, her gray hair covered with a cap of the same material.

All over the house, but especially in this room, was the faint sweet odor of dried rose-leaves.

Mrs. Ingram looked up when Violet entered.

She seemed to bring with her an atmosphere of youth, grace, and beauty.

"You are my new companion," she said, in a sweet old voice that had in it a far-off ring and must once have been like music itself. "I am very glad to see you."

She seemed surprised at the fair beauty of Violet's face, and she looked at her intently.

"You are not much like the usual type of companions," she said gently. "I have had so many!"

A weary little sigh followed the words, and Violet's heart was touched.

"I have had so many," repeated the old lady; "and none of them stay long. When the natural companions of one's life are gone, all seems gone.

"I have lost husband and children. The only relative I have left is one grandchild—one beautiful grandchild. Ah, my dear, what companions could fill the place of those I have lost?"

"None," answered Violet; "but I will do my best."

"Thank you, my dear," she replied. "I think—I am sure you will please me. You have a sweet voice and a beautiful face; but you are young and hopeful. This life will be dull for you."

Violet's fair face shadowed as she remembered what life had done for her.

"I do not like what people call life," she answered. I shall be best content here with you."

It seemed like a haven of rest, this grand old house with its surroundings, its old-fashioned magnificence, and its faint odor of dead rose-leaves.

Violet looked at the mistress of the place.

"I had better tell you frankly," she said, "that I have never been out as companion before, and that I am quite ignorant of the duties of one. If you will but tell me what to do, I will try my best to do it."

"I can sum up the duties of a companion in very few words," said Mrs. Ingram. "Have you a mother living?"

"No," replied Violet.

"Try to imagine what it would be if you had; and what you would do for your mother do for me."

"I will try," said Violet gently.

"If I am cross or irritable—and old age is full of crotchets—bear with me; if I am ill, be kind to me.

"I live in a world of shadows. My lost husband and my lost children are always with me; do not startle me suddenly from my dreams.

"The most merciful part of my life now is my dreams. I want you," she continued, "not to be always with me, but always near me.

"I do not rise until late, so that the morning hours will be all your own; my maid attends to me then; but when I am downstairs I shall wish you to read to me, to walk out in the grounds with me, to drive out with me, to receive visitors for me, to answer my letters. You will find plenty of employment, and I hope you will be happy."

The evening, when Violet had retired to her room and the mantle of night and silence had fallen over the house, she felt a vague longing—for what she was hardly conscious.

She was young, every pulse beating with the full tide of youth and life; she felt shut out of the world.

This quiet house amongst the trees did not seem to be part of the world she had lived in.

It was barely nine o'clock, and yet every light was out except hers, every one asleep but herself.

The moon was shining brightly.

From the great windows of her room she could see the park and the trees, and the brook that ran its winding course.

She could see the lovely alley called the Queen's Walk; the moon shone full upon it, silvering the great trunks of the trees and throwing weird shadows on the grass.

A queen had walked up and down there, watching the moon perhaps with sad passionate eyes, watching the sun with longing too great for words.

How many hundred years back was it since she did so, and what was Philippa of Hainault like?

Had her heart burned, like the hearts of other women, with love?

Had it been torn, like the hearts of other women, with jealousy?

"Oh, dead queen," asked Violet, "did you suffer as I have suffered?"

But the white moonlight lay where Philippa of Hainault had walked, and the trees told no secrets.

What was her husband doing on this moonlit night?

Then, looking at the hand which bore no wedding-ring, she said to herself that she had no husband, yet fell asleep to dream of her artist-lover as she had seen him first in the woods of St. Ryno's.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THREE weeks had passed since Violet came to Queen's Elm. The stately spirit of the place seemed in some measure to have entered into her.

There was a dignified precision about everything which was new to her. All was so old; there was almost sacrilege in the thought of anything modern. The servants were old, and had grown gray in the service of the family; they were servants of the old-fashioned type, full of respect and reverence for their superiors, proud enough of the state of life to which they had been called, proud of being good servants and serving good people; there was no absurd aping of their betters, but a quiet reliance on themselves and their own claims to consideration.

Everything was so old, with such an out-of-the-world glamor, that Violet's youth and Violet's beauty seemed almost out of place.

Nevertheless she was soon beloved and worshipped by the whole household.

They told her that her face was like sunshine.

And they waited upon her as though she had been a queen.

"Thank Heaven," said the mistress of Queen's Elm to her one day, "that you are a lady, my dear."

Violet started suddenly at the words, much as if she had received a blow in the face.

Mrs. Ingram went on:

"No one knows what it is to live on intimate terms with a person who is not a lady. I have suffered much from it.

"Of course, all those who have been with me have had a certain amount of polish; but in many cases it has been like the veneer on common wood."

"I am not a lady by birth," stammered Violet. "My father was only a poor doctor; my aunt, who brought me up, had very little to live upon; she was only a governess."

"Pardon me," said the old lady, with a smile, "you are a lady; you have refined thoughts, your ideas are all beautiful, dainty and fanciful; you have principle, you have courage; you can enter into the thoughts, the hearts, the lives of others; you are sensitive to the very tip of your pretty fingers, my dear; you never jar upon one. I say you are a lady."

"Now, why," thought Violet, "should she judge me so differently from Lady Ryvers, who called me vulgar and ill-bred?"

"I have an idea," said Mrs. Ingram, impressively, "that, after all, the truest aristocracy is that of nature.

"The world has divided men into different classes; but nature has done the same thing, and in a far more startling manner. Men are not equal in fortune; they are still more unequal in gifts of body and mind. To my thinking, the noble nature surpass the noble birth; the two combined should produce perfection.

"I repeat that I thank Heaven that you are a lady, that your ideas are all beautiful, dainty and refined.

"Few can understand how constant association with a coarse-minded or unrefined person tortures one."

Then Violet began to understand many things, and to see that there was as much difference between a nature like Mrs. Ingram's and that of Lady Ryverswell as between cotton and silk.

Lady Ryvers was by birth a lady.

Mrs. Ingram was a lady both by birth and nature.

"You remind me," said Mrs. Ingram, "of a gentleman who said that he thought the cawing of a rook was a musical sound. One of his hearers scornfully asked him why.

"He replied that the whole music of nature, including the song of birds, the ripple of streams, the murmur of the wind, formed one magnificent harmony which could not be judged by a single note, any more than the beauty of an air could be judged by the playing of one note in it; so that the cawing of a rook, which was not music perhaps in itself, formed part of the grand harmony of creation.

"In like manner, to form a perfect world, there must be in it people of all kinds, all natures, all temperaments, to make the grand and perfect whole. You understand?"

"Yes," replied Violet; and to herself she added: "I shall begin to think that I have come to school."

It was a good school.

She had been too angry at Ryverswell to see good in anything, everything was hateful to her.

She did not see any honor in that even to which honor was due. Here it was different.

All that was noble, beautiful, or dignified in high birth, in a long line of descent, in hereditary nobility was so placed before her, that she could not refuse her respect or honor.

She learned many things.

One warm, bright day in autumn Mrs. Ingram asked her to go with her to the churchyard at Elm Green.

"I want to see my husband's grave, Miss Beaton. I wonder if other people have the same sensation that I have—that being near the grave of one beloved seems to bring that one nearer?"

"I cannot tell," replied Violet. "Since I have been old enough to understand, I have lost no one by death."

Quite suddenly, as it seemed to her, a great storm of emotion swept over her heart and soul.

What if "he" died, the one man who had so completely changed the course of her life?

Would she care to sit by his grave that she might be nearer to him?

"I am always, it seems, asking myself questions that I cannot answer," thought Violet.

She had poetry enough and sympathy enough to note the beautiful expression on Mrs. Ingram's face as they drew nearer to the churchyard.

"My husband has been buried twenty years," said the old lady, "yet each time I go to his grave it seems to me that I am nearer to him; and in my fancy, as I grow old, my memory of him seems to grow younger.

"When he was buried, I remembered him as old and feeble; now I find myself thinking of him as young, strong, vigorous, and handsome.

"My dear, which shall I find him in Heaven? Will he be the old man with white hair who died full of years and honors, or will he be the handsome young fellow who never gave me any peace from the moment he met me until the hour he married me? I often wonder which it will be?"

"Heaven seems to me the home of eternal youth," remarked Violet, in a tone of reverence.

"Think of the old and the feeble, the weary and aged, who find refuge there," said Mrs. Ingram.

"Death gives back youth and vigor," returned Violet.

"How little we know, child, even the wisest and cleverest among us!" said Mrs. Ingram.

And then they came to the pretty, old churchyard.

"The Ingrams have a grand family vault under the church," said Mrs. Ingram; "but my husband could not endure it.

"He loved the bright sunshine, the fresh air, and he prayed always that he might be buried here under the trees.

"My husband loved all nature, especially all outdoor nature. He was so bright and cheery, he took sunshine with him everywhere."

And, as they walked together to the green grave, the faithful old wife who had been so true to one love and one husband, leaned on the arm of the beautiful young wife who had so impulsively and impatiently flung aside her obligations and duties.

A large white marble cross stood at the head, great elm trees shaded it, birds sang in the green depths, the fresh, sweet wind swept over it, bearing the breath of many flowers.

It was a grave that seemed to take the bitterness from death.

On the cross was the simple record of the man's life and death.

"You see, my dear," said Mrs. Ingram, "there is a space left for me, and we shall sleep together there, my husband and I, until the great day of doom.

"We shall stand together then, face to face, and there will not be the sound of an angry word between us. If you should ever marry, my dear, marry as I did, from love."

Violet, in her simple honesty, was about to cry out:

"I am married."

But she remembered in time that she had annulled her marriage, and taken off her wedding-ring.

Mrs. Ingram sat down on one of the numerous seats scattered about the old churchyard.

"I am at the end of life," she said slowly, "and you, child, are at the beginning. You will love and marry some day; you are too beautiful for men to pass by.

"Love and marriage, the two great crowns, the two great mysteries of woman's life, will come to you. Think, when they do, of all that I say to you now. My husband lived with me thirty years, and when we meet face to face, there will not be the sound of an angry word between us. Think of that, my dear."

And Violet did think.

She remembered her fiery denunciations, her hot anger, her burning pride, her resentment against her husband—there would be far more than the sound of an angry word between them.

"A marriage such as ours was, is heaven upon earth," said the old lady. "For thirty years my husband and I lived in the sweetest peace and harmony, and during all that time we never, Heaven be praised, had one angry word!

"But there was a secret in this, one that all sensible wives soon learn."

"What is it?" cried Violet eagerly.

"Forbearance," she replied. "That is the secret of happiness in married life—to bear and forbear, not to have wide-open eyes for each other's faults, and, what is better still, to love with a grand, generous, noble love that loves in spite of faults."

"Is there such a love?" asked Violet.

"May Heaven send it to you some day!" said Mrs. Ingram. "That is the grandest love of all—not the love that idealises and believes the object beloved to be perfect—that kind of love always ends in disappointment—but the grand generous love that is not lessened by faults.

"My husband had faults; and I loved him in spite of them. I had faults, and he loved me in spite of them. We both knew that we were ordinary human beings, and we made allowance for each other. The result was, we never had one angry word. 'We have been married thirty years, and we have never had a quarrel,' my husband said when he lay dying; nor should we have had one had we lived together fifty more."

"This differs from aunt Alice's teaching," thought Violet, and it differs greatly from my practice."

"I thought," she said slowly, "that, just as there are always sharpest thorns beneath sweetest roses, so the longest thorns are hidden under the orange-blossoms."

"That may be; but it is in the power of every sensible wife to blunt them; they need never wound. Remember that when you wear orange-blossoms of your own."

"Yes, I shall think of you as a wife who had not one thorn in her wreath of orange-blossoms," said Violet.

"Say, rather, a wife, my dear, who bent and broke the point of every thorn she found," rejoined Mrs. Ingram.

Violet had plenty of food for meditation as they drove home.

CHAPTER XXXV.

UP to this time Violet had believed herself perfectly right, that the conduct of her husband and his mother had been utterly unjustifiable, and that she had been injured and wronged, and that, in throwing off her allegiance to her husband and trying herself to break her bonds, she had acted bravely and nobly.

But the hour spent in the churchyard rather changed her ideas.

Love was not a matter of caprice, nor marriage a matter of whim; it was the most solemn of obligations.

Certainly no woman could do as she had tried to do—break her own bonds.

She began to doubt herself—she who had been so confident in her might and right.

What if she had done wrong, after all?

She could not forget Randolph.

The handsome face, the kindly voice, the love-light in his eyes, his constant care for her, his devotion to her, and his mad, passionate love for her haunted her as they never did before.

She had hardened her heart against him; she had exaggerated her own wrongs; but she could not deaden her memory.

In those days Violet was a study.

She was sure of no one feeling or emotion; her brain, mind, and soul were in confusion.

Love, revenge, tender memories of bygone days, hatred of all that her husband loved, took possession of her by turns; she could not tell whether she loved Randolph or hated him, whether she wished most to keep away from him or longed most to see him again.

She tried to understand herself, but could not.

Was it love of him that kept her awake at night, thinking over him and going over in fancy every hour they had spent together? Was it love that kept the sound of his voice ever in her ears?

Was it love or hate? She could not tell; she did not know.

"I cannot understand my own heart," she said to herself; "much less could anyone else understand it."

One morning—she had dreamed of Randolph all night—Mrs. Ingram asked her why she looked so thoughtful.

"I have been trying," answered Violet, "to solve a problem for myself, and I can't do it. I was wondering whether in any circumstances whatever a wife ought to leave her husband."

"Certainly not," was the stern reply. "No matter whether she be in the right or wrong, the world shows its estimate of such women by ignoring them."

"But suppose that a man is cruel to his wife, ill-uses her, abuses her—what then?"

"I should say that a woman in fear of her life might be justified in leaving her husband; but even in that case I do not approve of it. I think this, that, let a man be bad as he may, his wife should have patience with him, and try to make him better."

"You would think very badly then of any wife who left her husband for smaller matters than ill-usage?"

"I should despise any woman who thought lightly or acted carelessly with regard to the greatest obligation and the most sacred tie life holds. Women have so much in their power; they have two great weapons, patience and forbearance."

"You have seen only the bright side of marriage, Mrs. Ingram," said Violet sadly.

"I have lived many years, and I have seen a great deal of life," replied the elder woman.

"Suppose that two people did not really agree," Violet went on—"that the husband liked one kind of life, the wife another, and that they had no one thought in common, that the wife hated what the husband loved, and *vice versa*—would you not think that a reason for leaving each other?"

"No, indeed, I should not. Leaving husband or wife for such trifles as those I should consider madness or wickedness," said Mrs. Ingram.

"Suppose," said Violet, rushing boldly to her fate, "that a man married a girl beneath him in rank, and that, when he took her home, his friends treated her unkindly, even tried to prove that her marriage was not legal—would she not be justified in leaving him?"

"Certainly not. Any wife in such a position as that, if she had a particle of common-sense, would try conciliation, would do her best to please her husband's family."

"Go one step farther," said Violet. "Suppose that the husband had grossly deceived the girl, beguiled her into marrying him by telling, or rather by acting, a deliberate lie—what would you say then?"

"I should still say her duty was to remain with him. The sanctity of the marriage-tie is too solemn to allow of its being broken; and, if it were broken of one pretext, it would be on others. There is but one course, and that is to keep it inviolable."

Violet carried those words in her heart for many long days.

The same evening a surprise was in store for her.

Mrs. Ingram sent for her earlier than usual to her room.

She seemed unusually excited.

"My dear," she said, "I want you. I have a letter from my grand-daughter; she is

coming to-night. It is very kind of her. She is so beautiful and so brilliant that she has many invitations; she has given up several to come to me."

"What do you wish me to do?" asked Violet gently.

"Give orders about her rooms. Gwendoline is very particular; and indeed she is quite right to be so; her life is most precious."

Only one word in Mrs Ingrain's answer struck Violet, and that was "Gwendoline," a name that was so uncommon, yet horribly familiar to her.

The very sound of it seemed to bring the dowager Lady Ryvers before her, she who had spoken so often of Gwendoline Marr.

She turned suddenly white, she grew faint, and trembled; yet surely there were many Gwendolines in the world! Why that awful spasm of fear? She must know who this girl was, and that at once.

"What a pretty name—Gwendoline!" she said. "An old English name, is it not?"

"Yes—one much used in the Marr family. My grand-daughter is Gwendoline Marr."

For a few minutes it seemed to Violet as though the ground were opening beneath her feet.

Of all the strange fates in the world, it was the strangest that was bringing her hither.

Not until this moment did she recognize how jealous she had been of Gwendoline Marr, the girl whom the dowager Lady Ryvers and Lady Lester loved, the girl whom they all wished Randolph to marry.

It had been a smouldering fire, and now suddenly it broke into a burning flame.

She was bitterly jealous of her.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Love And Roses.

BY JULIA B. TORREY.

CHAPTER IV.—[CONTINUED.]

OH, no, no, no,—do not go—do not go—indeed I do love you,—and—well, yes, I will also speak out frankly. I too have been guilty of a little deception."

"You, also, my darling!" exclaimed Arthur, in wonder and delight, laying both hands gently on her shoulders, and looking so tenderly into the depths of the two pretty eyes, that she bent them in confusion, to the ground.

"As you are not the poet Hillborn," said she, "so am I not the Viola Schneider who sent that letter to your uncle. That was my aunt.

"All the time I have been here, I have been burning up with the fever of shame, thinking that you must surely scorn and despise me, because of that horid letter."

"Of course!" interrupted Arthur, "it would have been most natural for me to entertain such thoughts, if you had not been—yourself!"

"My aunt," continued Viola, "who is my god-mother, and whose name I bear, wrote the letter.

"She told me all about it, in a confidential way, while on a recent visit at my guardian's in B.

"She returned to her home in Blin intending to come directly on here, but the next day she wrote me that she was undergoing one of her severe rheumatic attacks, which would rob her of the exquisite joy of seeing her idolized poet, as she was in no condition to travel.

"She inclosed within it, another letter, in which she had given utterance to her disappointment in a most pathetic and poetic way.

"My good aunt wished me to read this letter, thinking that its beautiful language would have a triple effect,—that it would awaken my deepest feelings, exalt my mind, and excite my admiration for the melody of thought and words it contained.

"After I had read it, I was to have forwarded it to one Herr Hellborn.

"But on the very same day I received it, something happened that terrified me, and in my excitement I threw the letters in the fire, rushed to the steam-cars, to escape to the place, where I knew that hospitable politeness was waiting to receive a Fraulein Viola Schneider."

I could not endure my deaf and dumb role another instant.

[illegible] had taken such a course that a loud "Hurrah!" a joyous ha! ha! broke from my lips, while my wife giving me a stormy embrace followed my excellent example, and as for my nephew, he surpassed me both in his mode and force of expressing his jubilant emotions.

"Now," I then said to Arthur, "now that this matter in regard to our Viola has been so satisfactorily settled, you may thank your aunt twice over because she fell in love with me, and has held possession of me for more than twenty years; for otherwise I should never have promoted you to the rank of my 'governor' and other self, during this dear visit at my house."

The next morning, as we were finishing breakfast, Arthur said to his betrothed, who with her dove-like face was sitting by his side—

"Viola, I should like to have you take a little excursion to-day—to give someone a delightful surprise.

"Your guardian, as I happened to learn yesterday, is somewhat anxious about your absence; and in order to pacify him, I have invited him to come to our station, to-day, on the twelve o'clock train, to hear news of you.

"Will you go with me, to have a talk with him?"

Viola looked somewhat embarrassed; then she said—

"Dear mutes, will you promise me to be dumb indeed, if I tell you something—you also, Arthur?

"I have said nothing about it before, because I would not have it known for all the world, but now it is—all in the family! On the evening before I ran away, my guardian, Herr Bressler, made me a proposal of marriage—in just such a way as he would have suggested for consideration a business proposition.

"He actually told me, in his good humored way, that if I would consent, he would have a fine conservatory built in his garden!

"It frightened me to death, and I did not know what to say; I stuttered out something—I do not remember what—and the next day in my terror I flew to the steam-cars, and came here, in order to—well, the rest was all explained to you yesterday! How wrathful my guardian will be with me now when he sees me!

"But the idea of my being the mamma of young Herr August Bressler who does nothing all day long but smoke cigars, and who is too lazy to wash his own hands—it was too terrible to——"

"But," interposed Arthur smilingly, "I cannot see anything 'terrible' in it—for I owe my happiness to it!

"My Viola, my life, I shall ever hold that proposal 'in memory dear,' as the star of fate that guided you to my yearning heart!"

She flashed a sweet, shy look of tender love upon her hero, and then said—

"I will 'brave him,' and go, if you wish it, my heart,—but do not let him provoke you into anger, be sweetly composed, even if he should prove unpleasant!"

Arthur promised to be on his best behavior.

They drove off in a buggy.

Upon their return they told us that Herr Bressler had kept the appointment, and upon being informed how the affair stood, he had naturally made an attempt to be unpleasant; but then Viola, with a resolute nod of her wilful little head had given him to understand that her determination to take unto herself a different kind of guardian could not be be shaken; and Arthur had discussed the financial side of the affair to the guardian's evident satisfaction.

And so they had brought his blessing back with them.

Now nothing barred the way to their perfect happiness except the natural and disquieting thought, as to what the enthusiastic aunt would say, when she should hear of the role her bold niece had played toward her favorite poet!

I do not know how the young folks conciliated her; I only know that my nephew has now a decided respect for my poems,—those poems, which were, without any mistake, the prelude to that sweet, heavenly music that now thrills the hearts of Arthur and Viola, as they march onward, in wedded bliss, through their pathway of love and roses!

[THE END.]

The Two Gifts.

BY BERTIE BAYLE.

HE was the handsomest man Addie Chase had ever seen—the most charming man she had ever known, this genial, gentlemanly Dr. Edelin, whom all his brother practitioners envied, and whom his unmarried lady friends sympathized with because his wife had died a year or so since, leaving him with the little motherless girl and the three servants.

I say "sympathized" with him—which means that these young ladies, in the depths of their hearts, were perfectly resigned to the mysterious dispensation of Providence that left Dr. Edelin free to marry again and choose a mother for dainty little May, with her dark, thoughtful blue eyes, so like her father's, and her sunny brown hair waving off the forehead just as Dr. Edelin's did.

Further—they were not only resigned to the loss of Mrs. Edelin, but experienced a sense of actual delight that there was a chance for them.

Not mentioning other names, as they have no vital import to our sketch, Addie Chase and Florence Kenyon loved him.

He—went his way between them, so pleasant, so kind, so indifferent, that there were times when the girls' hearts nearly broke for very hopelessness.

It had been after Dr. Edelin had made his customary afternoon call on Mrs. Chase, who had been an invalid for years, when he had bowed and smiled a good-afternoon to Addie as she sprang into his elegant little carriage, where the boy was holding the reins.

She watched him drive away with an increased carmine on her cheeks and an excited light in her blue eyes that made her very pretty to see.

Then, with a little sigh she turned from the window, and went across the room to her dressing bureau, glancing in the mirror a moment as she opened one of the drawers and took out a little square box.

She saw the heightened glow on her cheeks, the unmistakable signs of agitation in her eyes; then smiled drearily back at herself.

"I wonder if he ever will care for me?

"I wonder if I ever will cease caring—for a man whom I worship so madly, so hopelessly?

"Last Christmas, when Gracie Edelin was but five weeks dead, I was a thousand fold happier than to-day.

"Happier, because I had not been disappointed."

There came over her face a perfect cloud of distress, as she untied the lid of the box, and took out first, a card, on one side of which her own name was engraved, and on the other side bore a short message in pencil that read—

"Will Dr. Edelin accept as a thank-offering the accompanying, from a friend and patient to whom he has been so kind, with an earnest wish that he may enjoy health and happiness."

She read it over and over again, letting her eyes rest on his name as if the letters fascinated her.

Then she removed a little square of perfumed pink cotton, and lifted from the box a large oval locket, of elegant design and workmanship, and bearing on one side his monogram in blue enamel.

A most exquisite charm for a gentleman's watch-chain, and that Addie had ordered weeks before out of the fulness of her love for him, although propriety demanded she marked the true motive under the perfectly legitimate one of gratitude.

She was grateful, so was her widowed mother, to whom the doctor was as attentive as though she were made of money, and Addie knew there could be no harm in the gift.

And yet—more than once, her conscience had given a twinge at the extravagance she knew she could not afford.

More than once she remembered the unpaid bills with which she had saved enough to buy the locket, and of which no one need ever know.

But yet—everything succumbed to her love—even the very principles of honorable duty.

To-day, with the memory of Dr. Edelin's handsome face still fresh to her, with his sweet, ringing voice still in her ears, Addie only remembered the possible happiness her gift might bring her—only thought of the not impossible result of her gift.

So she poked the dainty bijou among the downy cotton and laid the card upon it, and tied up the box and sent it.

* * * * * *

A tiny room, with the fire burning merrily in the grate that shed its warm illumination to the very corner where Willie Kenyon lay on the lounge, his thin, sweet face white as the ruffled pillow on which his head rested in such quiet patience of attitude.

Florence had not yet lighted the lamp, and with the darkness of the last falling shadows had come a delicious silence and restfulness in the little parlor, so sacred because such terrible suffering had been experienced there since the day Willie had fallen from the train, because of the wonderful fortitude and untiring patience which the boy had manifested throughout.

And now, three months since Dr. Edelin had been summoned in wild haste to attend the mangled child.

Florence drew her low chair back from the fire, so that the very brightest glow should not discover the tears in her eyes—for there were tears there, born of the strangely sweet, sad thoughts the hour gave rise to, thoughts that had haunted her many a time in those past few weeks, but that, to-night, had a strangely delicious pain in them.

It was no new thing for her to think of him—she did not know the moment when she was not thinking of him, with the handsome, grave face, his thoughtful eyes she had learned to avoid lest he should read the secret she guarded so jealously.

She had given all the love of her pure, girlish heart to him, to Willie's physician, Dr. Edelin, whose very presence was a better balsam than most doctors' physic.

To Dr. Edelin, whom she had seen every day for weeks, with whom she had been thrown in such close contact that there had been times when she had left the room for fear her tell-tale face and eyes would betray her to the quick-eyed man.

She was always quiet, just a little distant, when he came, except once, the very last time he called, when he brought May, rosy and ruddy, to cheer Willie a little.

Then, if her life had been the forfeit, Florence could not have helped it, she had caught the child in her arms, with a perfect gust of passion, and clasped her in her arms, and kissed her.

Then, when she caught just a glimpse of Dr. Edelin's face, wearing an expression she was wholly at a loss to translate, she had suddenly put May down, coldly saying—

"She is so pretty, I can't help it."

Such a detestable excuse, and by the sudden harshness in his eyes she never knew could come there, Florence was assured Dr. Edelin despised her.

All these memories came crowding over her, as she crouched by the fire, wishing she only dared meet him face to face as indifferently as he could do.

Wishing, oh, so earnestly, that she dared give him something, just because her heart yearned towards him so.

Dared she?

She sat so quietly for a half-hour, that Willie spoke to her, half alarmed.

"Florrie, didn't you hear mother call you?"

She came back from dreamland with a smile on her sweet face.

"I didn't hear, dear. I must hurry, too, because after tea I want to gather my pink rosebuds and some heliotrope and geranium and take them for a little offering to your kind doctor. Shall I, Willie?"

"Oh, yes—do."

Florrie sat down to tea with a tender, sweet seriousness on her face that even her matter-of-fact mother noticed.

Then she took her scissors and went from pot to pot, severing every bud from her plants, and out the crispest, greenest leaves.

"He shall have the very best—all," she said to herself, as she arranged them. "I love him—whether he cares for me or not; and I know now, if I never knew before, that it is better to love in vain than never to love at all."

She wrapped her shawl around her, and went to the house whose brilliantly-lighted windows were a token that the doctor was in.

* * * * * *

It was a delightfully pleasant suite of rooms.

Brussels carpet, suite of dark-brown rep furniture, a marble centre-table, a cheery fire glowing in the grate, curtains of brown cashmere, composed the outfit of the reception-room.

The second of the suite, much smaller, contained only in addition to the Brussels carpet and curtains, a medicine case, a chair in front of it for Dr. Edelin, and a chair for the visitor.

Back of this was his private room—a large elegant room, into which very few people were so favored as to be invited.

It was furnished most luxuriantly, and had a side-door that led directly to the residence the doctor occupied.

It was in this inner room that Dr. Edelin sat, his round of calls finished, and his face, attitude and manner showing perfectly the marks of the day's toil and anxieties.

He had drawn a large easy-chair to the centre-table where a shaded lamp burned with soft lustre, and on which lay a small square box, whose protecting string he had just cut with his knife, preparatory to opening, when a tinkle at the door-bell announced the coming of someone—doubtless a patient, as he heard footsteps a second after.

He arose at once, and went to meet the caller—a poor woman, with her baby in her arms, and a world of anxiety on her plain, honest face.

Dr. Edelin smiled as pleasantly as though she had been born to the purple.

"Sit down, Mrs. Maginnis. Is the little fellow sick again?"

"Oh, yes, doctor, sick with that awful croup ag'in. He come as near dyin' last night as ever ye see'd anyone."

"I am sorry you had to bring him out, the night air is not good."

"That's the truth, but how could I leave him?

"Not even Biddy McClure would keep the darling without I pay her for the trouble, and not a penny is it I have since I spent the last of Tom's wages, and Miss Chase be a-owin' me for the washin' these six weeks back."

Dr. Edelin's hand trembled ever so slightly as he was putting up the powders.

"That's too bad, Mrs. Maginnis. Tell me where you live, and let me send you a something round."

The woman's face broadened into a smile of surprise and delight.

"You are a kind gentleman, and may God bless you? There's more than Nora Maginnis and Tom that shall eat of your bounty—there's the young lady as lives below-stairs, with the bad cough, sir, as has been sewin' day an' night these three weeks for that same Miss Chase, and not a penny did she receive when she sent in the bill yesterday with the politest note you ever see."

Mrs. Maginnis did not see the frown gathering on Dr. Edelin's forehead.

She took the little package of medicine without a thought of the fatefulness of her child's illness and her own coming.

"Get home out of the night air as soon as you can, Mrs. Maginnis, and give the child a powder. I think there will be no trouble after that. Good-night."

He was not quite as genial as his wont, but the woman's heart was too glad to note anything amiss; and he went back to his room with a frown on his face.

"I never would have thought it of Addie Chase, pretty, graceful, ladylike Addie. Her mother surely never knows it; and to think—to think."

He had untied the box and was reading the card that Addie Chase had written.

He lifted the locket from its nest, a grave, pitiful smile on his face, as he noted the monogram that betrayed the fact of it being made exclusively for him.

Then a sharp spasm of pain seemed to contract his features, and he dropped the bijou and buried his face in his hands.

"If it was only from her—my little darling whom I love so tenderly—the girl who avoids me as if I were contamination—the woman I love even better than my babe's mother! God help me, why did I ever know Florence, my darling, hopelessly mine!"

A second summons, a sound of light, quick footsteps, and then—

Florence came in radiant with blushes and the cool sting of the fresh night-air, her eyes bearing their burden of mingled coolness and ill-feigned interest that had at times encouraged, at times completely baffled him.

Coming as she did, at the very moment of Dr. Edelin's passionate appeal, her presence startled him out of his customary ease—for a second.

Florence saw him turn half-nervously towards his chair again.

She noted the sudden tenseness of his mouth, and half regretted her childishness in bringing her little gift.

She regretted it more when Dr. Edelin motioned her to a chair, and remained standing himself, striving with all his strong will-power to conquer the overflowing tenderness that trembled on his very lips.

And Florence, seeing only the outer man

felt her poor little heart sink heavily; yet she determined to brave it out.

So, very carefully, very studied and indifferent, she unfastened the little paper bag, and took out the flowers and laid them on the table just beside the box containing Addie Chase's unfortunate gift.

Dr. Edelin leaned forward over the back of the chair, a sudden light shining in his eyes.

"For me—are these for me, Miss Florence?"

She nodded her head coolly.

"For you, Dr. Edelin, from Willie. He seems unable to do enough for you—and you have been very good to him, to us all."

The light vanished as swiftly as it came, but he took the flowers softly up, and touched them tenderly, as Florence had seen him touch a sick baby's hand, or a fevered brow.

"Tell Willie he knows that I am very much obliged—and to you, for bringing them, but forgive me—I was so, so happy for the brief moment I supposed you cared enough for me to be the giver."

He spoke in a low, half-pained voice, and a hot flush flew all over her face.

"I—I—they did grow on my plants, Dr. ——"

He was beside her in a second.

"I know it. I have seen them often, and envied them the caressing touch of your hands. Florence, tell me you cared for them for me!—tell me you gathered and brought them for my sake! Florence, Florence!—don't disappoint me!"

He was all passionate eagerness now—this handsome, proud lover, a moment since in the very depths of doubt.

"I—I—did, Dr. Edelin. Please don't think it was—too—too bold—too——"

He fairly snatched her in his arms, and stopped her mouth with love's kisses.

"Thank God for this! Tell me once, Florrie, my Florrie, that you love me truly."

"Tell me—do you love me?"

He smiled so fondly down in her face that her own eyes reflected it.

"Oh, Dr. Edelin, I have loved you from the moment I saw you first. I do love you—oh, you never can know how much!"

Then he kissed her, so tenderly, so gravely, that in all her life she never had felt so strangely, sweetly solemn.

"I will—I am so happy—I cannot talk."

"We will have all our lives to talk in, dear; just think of it—a whole lifetime together! My darling, can we ever cease thanking God for this blessed joy?"

* * * * * * *

The next day, Addie Chase, with flushed and feavered cheeks, and bright, excited eyes, waited for a vague something she dared not mention to herself even when, there came a little parcel to her door, brought by Dr. Edelin's boy—a pocket and a letter that said—

"My Dear Miss Addie,—It was with most cordial thanks I received your friendly token last evening, bestowed, I am confident, in the mistaken though kindly idea that I was deserving of such a beautiful and expensive expression of regard. Please accept my earnest thanks for the motive that prompted yourself and mother, and be assured, though I feel it my duty to decline the gift, that fact does not lessen my obligation to the givers.

"With good wishes, I am
"As ever, your friend,
"R. A. Edelin."

Every word smote the girl like a two-edged sword; and yet, even amid all the horrible anguish that shook her when she realized her love was in vain, was a thrill of thankfulness for the delicate manner in which Dr. Edelin had returned the locket; and she resolved the impression he entertained of her mother being a joint donor with herself should not be removed.

But—it was bitterly hard.

She was a woman, and she loved; and when, in later days, she knew of Dr. Edelin's engagement to Florence Kenyon, she realized, to the fullest extent, what it meant to mourn and not be comforted, for long, weary, hopeless years.

The Reply.

BY RANDALL W. BAYLE.

PRUDIE WARNER, the village school teacher, was entertaining a caller this gray December morning, it being holiday time, and although Prudie had heard from gossiping Mrs. Taylor that Hattie Belden thought "Prudence Warren should have been dropped long ago," she was as gracious to her as though said bit of gossip had never reached her ears.

Mrs. Bryant's annual New Year's party had been talked over, and Hattie Belden was certain that her hostess had an invitation when she broached another subject.

"Mrs. Taylor was telling me that you were remaking your blue silk; I am dying to see it!"

"Miserable old newsmonger!" thought Prudie, as she brought out the dress.

"Why, Prudence, it really looks well. No one would ever know that it was an old one, only, of course, those who have always seen it; and you wore it last year, didn't you?"

"Yes," admitted Prudie, who knew in her own mind all the malice and spite of her visitor's jealous heart.

"I have a new velvet," went on Miss Belden. "But I suppose we shall be eclipsed by Miss Eaton, who is visiting Mrs. Bryant. Lee's betrothed, you know.

Unexpected as was the blow, not a sign did Prudie Warner give that the news was aught to her as she went on folding the silk, preparatory to laying it away.

"Indeed I do not know," she returned, quite pleasantly.

"No, it is not known generally," continued Miss Belden, keeping her sharp eye upon Prudie.

But that young lady held her own bravely until her mischievous friend departed, and was safely down the steps.

"These village gossips, how odious they are!" she said to herself, with a sigh of relief.

Then she went into her own little dressing-room, where lay the despised blue silk, and her eyes grew heavy with a burden of tears.

"Oh, how I wish I were rich!" she cried. "I will not—I never can—go there now."

But everything seemed to Prudie in a distorted and poverty-stricken light this morning.

How she did wish she could have a bright new dress!

Everyone would have a new dress but herself.

But go she must, and be as bright and gay as the others, or everyone would suspect her secret: for Lee Bryant had been dove-eyed Prudie's greatest friend and devoted cavalier from childhood, and now they said he was engaged to Eva Eaton, the blue-eyed fairy visiting at his mother's house.

Poor Prudie!

She was only a workingman's daughter, and the village tongues thought that Mrs. Bryant, the rich man's wife, of Willington, had made too much of her.

At last, wiping away her tears, she stood up, and putting on her things, went out for a walk.

Far ahead of her the dead leaves were whirling in little eddies, and heaping themselves at the side of the road.

She picked up a long, slender stick, and began turning over the leaves as she passed, finding a languid sort of enjoyment in her occupation.

All at once she started.

Surely that was no monster leaf!

No, but a well-filled, worn leather pocket-book, half covered with the hurrying leaves.

Prudie stooped and picked it up.

At that moment her bad angel must have been passing, for she glanced furtively around her, and seeing no one, thrust it into the breast of her jacket, and walked on with hasty steps.

As she neared home she met Mrs. Taylor, who exclaimed, "Laws, child, how white you are! Have you heard the news? Old Mr. Bryant has lost his pocket-book with over five hundred pounds in it. He's been postin' up a reward for it—twenty pounds. There's one of them"—pointing to a bill at the corner.

Prudie read it hastily, and excusing herself, passed into her father's yard.

On entering the house she found not a waiting father, but a note lying upon the table.

It was just at the hour of twilight, and she lighted the little reading-lamp and read:—

"Prudie,—

"Your uncle is very ill at Manchester, and I am obliged to leave by the 4.50 train. Will be home to-morrow.

"Father."

Thus left to herself, she closed every blind and drew every curtain in the little cottage.

Glancing stealthily around into every corner of the darkened apartment, she drew the heavy pocket-book from her breast and opened it.

Yes, there it was, more money than she had ever seen together before in her life.

Need I say that she was tempted?

The poverty of her every day life rose before her—the bright love dream of her life, which lay in ashes at her feet, passed before her mental vision.

No one saw her pick the pocket-book up.

She could destroy it, and even her own father would never know.

Mr. Bryant was the owner of a half-million; he would never feel the loss, while she must toil, unloved, because she was poor.

Instinctively her hand took up the pocket-book and the few papers it continued, and placed them in the open grate.

Then she went for wood and a match.

She struck the match.

It burned with a feeble ray, but that one ray cast all its light upon one line of an ancient illuminated "Ten Commandments" which hung upon the wall, and that line shone out like a text of fire.

"Thou shalt not steal."

The match fell from the outstretched hand.

The articles were snatched from the grate, and she replaced everything as she first found them.

Then the white lips whispered—

"Am I a thief?"

Conscience answered—

"Almost—not quite."

Morning came cold and gray, the morning of the last day of the year, the morning before Mrs. Bryant's party.

Before nine o'clock Prudie Warner was again dressed in her gray walking-suit and in the street—this time bound for the great house upon the hill.

It was a timid little pull that Prudie gave the bell, but it was immediately answered by Mrs. Bryant herself, who kissed Prudie affectionately as she entered.

"My dear, why have you not called on us before? I have been telling Eva all about you, and have looked for you every clear day.

"We have been very lonely since Lee has been to London, but he returns to-day. Come in and see Eva;" and she hurried embarrassed Prudie into the breakfast-room.

"My niece, Eva Eaton, Miss Warner," she continued.

"Why, Prudie, how dazed you look!"

"Well I may," said Prudie, recovering herself. "I found Mr. Bryant's pocket-book."

"Is that so?" cried Mr. Bryant from the other side of the room. "Where on earth was it?"

Prudie explained as well as she was able, while amidst all the exclamations and questions that followed, golden-haired Eva Eaton had slipped in the seat by the side of Prudie, and had managed to whisper, "Lee told me all about you, dear."

"Well, Prudie," said Mr. Bryant, "you are a very honest little girl; just the one I want for a daughter-in-law."

"Charles!" said Mrs. Bryant, reproachfully, while Prudie's blushes deepened.

"Never mind the joke, Prudie; here is the reward."

And Mr. Bryant held out, not a twenty pound note, but one for a hundred pounds, for Prudie to accept.

"No, Mr. Bryant," she said, firmly; "I cannot take it—indeed I cannot!"

And she held fast to her resolution, in spite of all their persuasions.

She started towards her home a much lighter-hearted little girl than when she left it; but still in her heart she thought, "What would they think of me if they knew all?"

When she reached home someone was waiting for her. It was Lee.

"I could not go home before I saw you, Prudie," he said. "See what I bought for you in London."

And he held up a brilliant, sparkling ring, set in the finest gold.

Then she was obliged to answer a question which made two young hearts the happiest in all Willington.

"Now, darling, this your engagement ring—this is your new year's present."

And he drew a jewel-case from his pocket containing an entire set of rubies to match the ring in setting and brilliancy.

"And I want you to wear them all to-night."

"Miss Belden and her set gave up all thought of "dropping Prudence Warner," when they saw her enter Mrs. Bryant's drawing-room that evening upon the arm of her betrothed husband, and saw how affectionately she was greeted by her host and hostess.

Her bright, piquant face radiant with happiness, the glittering, gleaming jewels and the despised blue silk, made a picture no one could surpass.

And lovely Eva Eaton was by her side, a friend whose friendship was ever after one of the bright spots of her existence.

Long after, she told her husband the story of her temptation.

A kiss was his reply.

The "Black Flags."—In almost every land the manners differ, and it is well they do. What would our soldiers do were they ordered to diet themselves, as the "Black Flags" of China are? A French contemporary publishes the translation of an order of the day, found at Hanoi, and addressed to the Black Flags by one of their commanders.

The pirates and marauders were expressly charged before engaging in battle to eat such things as would keep up their courage. The menu from an American point of view, was not appetizing.

The first dish was a jelly of tiger's flesh, to give the combatants the "ferocity and anger of tigers."

On eight successive days they were to eat lion's liver, to make them intrepid; serpent's tongue, to endow them with craftiness; crocodile soup, to enable them to pursue the enemy by land and water; the brains of the hippopotamus, to render their skins hard and proof against bullets; the heart of monkey's, that they might possess that animal's dexterity in climbing; a dish of scorpions, a panther's breast, to render them pitiless.

The order concludes with the last and most important dish, which consisted of gunpowder made into pellets with leopard's blood.

The Black Flags are firm believers in bravery being transmitted. How they could fight at all after such a meal is a mystery. We sincerely hope that our soldiers will never have to be trained up in this fashion in order to become brave defenders of their country.

The First Year.—Many married young people make a terrible mistake in the first year of their housekeeping by living up to their income. If they are all wise, they will live very considerably under it.

The first year of a young couple's housekeeping should be the most economical of all the many years through which they hope to travel in sweet company and loving friendship.

Doubtless, as the days go by, the means and revenue of the husband will increase, but so, too, in a nearly sure and certain ratio, will the expense of family life mount up.

If the young people, therefore, be only wise and prudent, they will at the offset, determine to begin to put so much by to prepare for the inevitable rainy day which, sooner or later, attends on all people, and will not be denied admittance.

A few dollars saved in the first year or so of housekeeping, is a few dollars laid by as a sort of nest-egg; other dollars get added to it in the course of time, and in the end the saving thus commenced grows more often than not into round and comfortable sums.

M. S.

Scientific and Useful.

Rust.—To remove rust from tools, first scour them with emery moistened with sulphuric acid diluted with six volumes of water, rinse dry, and finish with oil and emery flour.

Creosote.—In a letter to *Woods and Forests* (London) an "Old Forester" testifies to the wonderful efficacy of creosote oil in preserving wood. It effectually prevents all growth of fungus, etc. The timber must be thoroughly dry before being creosoted.

Steel Nails.—The extra cost of steel nails has been reduced to 1 cent per pound. They are coming more and more into use, and can be driven into the hardest woods as easily as ordinary nails into pine. They have been driven into a white oak knot without bending.

Deaf Mutes.—It is contended that deaf mutes should be taught the use of the vocal organs and the reading of the lips, and should be educated in the public schools. The practice now pursued of placing the deaf children in schools apart from children who hear is believed to be distinctly tending to the development of a deaf race of people.

Waterproofing.—It is stated that sackcloth or canvas can be made as impervious to moisture as leather by steeping it in a decoction of one pound of oak-bark with fourteen pounds of boiling water. This quantity is sufficient for eight yards of stuff. The cloth has to soak twenty-four hours, when it is taken out, passed through running water, and hung up to dry. The flax and hemp fibers, in absorbing the tannin, are at the same time better fitted to resist wear.

A Horse Light.—One of the latest notions is to have a light on the forehead of the horse. We are assured that it gives perfect safety against accident when driving after dark. No fire, no liquids, no lamp, yet a never-failing bright signal light at a great distance. It is made of metal and covered with a combination of luminous compounds; is easily attached and detached; is made in different designs, and therefore very attractive if it should be carried in daytime.

Electric Jewelry.—A Frenchman has adapted incandescent electric lamps of 4 volts power to brooches, breast and hair pins, and the knobs of walking sticks. These are set with diamonds and rubies, true or mock. A large diamond is said to project sufficient light to read by, and the light may be shown or not, at pleasure, by turning a switch. The lamp is connected with a small battery, carried in the pocket, and capable of maintaining the incandescence for a full half-hour.

Farm and Garden.

Fowls.—The *Poultry Monthly* says that, as a rule, one variety of fowls is enough for almost any person to manage successfully and profitably, and this is especially true with beginners, who have to gain their experience in all the varied details of poultry management.

Roses.—As soon as the flowers have opened and bloomed one day, the decaying flower should be cut away, cutting back to a good strong bud, from which will come a new stem and flowers. Attention to this practice of cutting will keep plants blooming almost continuously.

Cooking Food.—Late-cut hay, ordinary straw and other course fodders are unquestionably improved by cooking, as it softens the woody fibre and dissolves portions of the starch; and cornmeal and other foods rich in starch are also improved by cooking. But in considering the question of economy although this will pay on a large scale, it is not likely to do so for a few animals, for it costs nearly as much to cook for ten as for fifty head of cattle.

Vines on Open Walls.—Cut the young shoots left on the plant for bearing wood, short, leaving on each four or more buds, according to their strength, and train the plant in a horizontal manner, in the form of a peach-tree, leaving, in every part of it, a supply of fruit-bearing buds, which are to be found only on the last year's shoots; all the superfluous and weak shoots, whether old or young, are cut off, and the remaining branches laid in at a distance from each other of about six inches, and during the summer a sufficiency of young shoots are laid in for the following year, after stopping them a short distance before the bunches of fruit.

Restoring Faded Flowers.—After a bouquet is drooping beyond all remedies of fresh water, the Japanese can bring it back to all its first glory by a very simple and seemingly most destructive operation. A recent visitor to Japan says:—"I had received some days ago a delightful bundle of flowers from a Japanese acquaintance. They continued to live in all their beauty for nearly two weeks, when at last they faded. Just as I was about to have them thrown away the same gentleman (Japanese gentleman) came to see me. I showed him the faded flowers, and told him that, though they lasting a long time they had now become useless. 'Oh, no,' said he, 'only put the ends of the stems into the fire, and they will be as good as before.' I was incredulous; so he took them himself an held the stems' ends in the fire until they were charred. This was in the morning; at evening they were again looking fresh and vigorous, and have continued so for another week."

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-THIRD YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 12, 1884.

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CHEER AND MIRTH.

To move through life with a cheerful bearing does not present itself to our minds sufficiently often and clear in the light of a duty. At times of festivity—at a wedding, at a birthday feast, it is true we feel it is our duty to take a happy face among our friends, or else to stay away; but when we fall back on the lower level of the ordinary week-day and work-day, we take no shame to ourselves for carrying about with us a brow of gloom, or a countenance of discontent.

We are too apt to ascribe to our innate temperaments the praise attaching to a blithe comportment, and the blame due to a sad demeanor.

But, indeed, save in the hour of bereavement or of humiliation, when aught but a sad aspect would appear to bespeak frivolity, we are all capable of so schooling ourselves that our presence shall be gladdening instead of saddening, and our arrival shall bring with it a sense of comfort, and not of depression; and undoubtedly it is a part of our duty to our neighbor, and one that will react most favorably on our own happiness, so to bear ourselves.

Some men communicate happiness, and rebuke dejection as a sunny spring morning does, and stand to us for an example of how to take life.

For those who have eyes to see, there is always some glorious sight to look on, and to fill the gaze with radiance; for those who have the heart to feel it, every morning that brings with it the power to rise from sleep and descend to breakfast, brings a signal good fortune.

To meet the morning with a dark face, is an affront to the sun; and to mope for one's own sorrows in the presence of another's mirth is unquestionably as bad in taste as to give the rein to hilarity in the presence of another's grief; yet the latter sin against good manners is one we would not lightly allow ourselves to be charged with.

Cheer and mirth are by no means synonomous. They are as different as a smile and a laugh. The latter may often be ill-timed; the former can hardly ever be so. We may bring a smile of comfort to the mourner by the bed of death, where a laugh would be sacrilege and desecration; for smiles and tears are no enemies, and no strangers. And so with cheer. The stern Christian moralist, who was also the greatest poet of the middle ages, felt that to live sunken in gloom of spirit was not only to make miserable this life, but to earn punishment in the next: for, when picturing the various sufferings imposed upon the lost souls for the various sins committed during life, he describes those "who in the sweet air that is cheered by the sun had lived sullenly," as compelled to abide infixed in a pool of slime, accusing themselves, too late, of having always carried within their own hearts the sluggish smoke that darkened their days.

So a man should comport himself cheerily among among his fellow men; and he will find that this very cheer is a key to open to him men's hearts, and homes at once—is a magic power that finds him a chair at every table and a place by every hearthside.

He will find this; and he will recognize that it is cheer he himself seeks in the intimacy and converse of friends—cheer that he seeks in his favorite pleasures—cheer that is offered to him by the lessons of religion; that it is this that makes the live and rippling brook the darling of the gloomy woodland—it is this that makes the glowworm the darling of the moonlight August night—it is this that makes the robin the darling of the silent winter morning, when the trees are leafless, and the snow is abroad, and no other bird has heart to sing.

SANCTUM CHAT.

A COLORED man who was called as a witness in New Haven, recently, said that he believed in a Supreme Power, but that he did not believe in a Supreme Being. The presiding judge said that such a man belonged in a lunatic asylum, and refused to allow him to testify.

—

THE same difficulties that exist in the public-school system in this country appear to prevail wherever the practice of educating the young at public expense exists. A London correspondent of a New York paper states that a strong agitation is rising in England against the School Boards for excessive expenditure, and for having killed numbers of children, or driven them silly, by educational overpressure.

—

AN educational journal advises that there should be a regular physician attached to every school of importance, to overlook the physical development of the pupils. The system has already been adopted in Paris, the physicians making regular tours of inspection, being paid by the municipality.

—

DRUGGISTS complain that their trade is not near so remunerative as it used to be. Besides the adverse influence of the "scalpers," conditions in the legitimate business are in other ways unfavorable. Toilet articles are now sold by grocers and other business men; patent medicines no longer remain specialties of the drug trade, and the monopoly of their most valuable wares has been broken.

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BREAKFAST parties are the fashionable Lenten entertainments in New York, and are served at 11 o'clock by candle-light. All daylight is excluded, and the guests, generally about twenty in number, are seated around four small tables, five guests at each table, and the tables are placed sufficiently near for general conversation. Breakfast is served in courses, after which there may be music or any amusement that the hostess may see fit to suggest.

—

PROF. JAMES, while on a visit to Germany, last summer, asked the professors of twelve German universities: "Do you think that too many young men are studying at the universities?" Almost uniformly the answer was: "There is no doubt of it." "Germany," said one of the professors, "is fostering the growth of a class of professionally-educated men for whom there is no room in the professions, and who are too proud to go into business of any sort. Result—poverty or suicide."

—

AT the time when the cholera panic last summer had reached the highest point, a number of philanthropists sought to preserve themselves and their European brethren by wearing, and recommending to the world at large, belts of plated copper, convinced that by the application of copper to the skin, they would be safe against an attack of the disease. Twenty thousand anti-cholera belts were manufactured, but, as the cholera did not come, the practical-minded members of the society have turned their belts to another use. The cholera belts have now become "hygienic belts against stoutness."

—

ELECTRIC lighting for the public highways in Boston, a paper of that city says, "is more expensive than gas, and as a luxury may answer very well in the cases of squares and parks. But when it comes to making the lighting of the streets, particularly in the central portions of Boston, dependent upon every severe storm, and when to that is added the liability of our fire alarm system being seriously damaged and the fire department temporarily thrown back on old methods of giving alarms, with the consequent danger of great losses, it is apparent how expensive a luxury this electric lighting may become."

—

A MEDICAL student who, without authority, makes any surgical experiment on a frog, is liable to prosecution, but a cruel boy may torture a frog in wanton amusement, and go unpunished. A man may be imprisoned for working a horse in an unfit condition, but a mountebank in a show may brutally assault, main, and half kill certain animals for not doing with alacrity that which it is utterly repugnant to the natures of these poor creatures to do. The public have very little idea of the barbarities practised upon so-called wild animals before they can be cowed so as to perform in those exhibitions which the law ought to prohibit if the good feeling of the community will not condemn them.

—

WE must regard every matter as an intrusted secret, which we believe the person concerned would wish to be considered as such. Nay, further still, we must consider all circumstances as secrets intrusted, which would bring scandal upon another if told, and which it is not our certain duty to discuss, and that in our own persons and to his face. The divine rule of doing as we would be done by, is never better put to test than in matters of good and evil speaking. We may sophisticate with ourselves upon the manner in which we would wish to be treated, under many circumstances; but everybody recoils instinctively from the thought of being spoken ill of in his absence.

—

MAN must have occupation, or be miserable. Toil is the price of sleep and appetite—of health and enjoyment. The very necessity which overcomes our natural sloth is a blessing. The whole world does not contain even a briar or a thorn which nature could have dispensed with. We are happier, with the sterility, which we can overcome with industry, than we could have been with spontaneous plenty and unbounded profusion. The body and the mind are improved by the toil that fatigues them. The toil is a thousand times rewarded by the pleasure which it bestows. Its enjoyments are peculiar. No wealth can purchase them—no indolence can taste them. They flow only from exertions which repay the laborer

—

IT is not the amount of work accomplished that exhausts the strength and leads to a break-down; it is the effort made, and the worry making it, that overtax the energy of control and the strength of action. Perhaps one of the most prolific causes of collapse in recent times has been the lack of training. This is not sufficiently recognized. In the old days of "apprenticeship" and slowly built-up qualifications for work, youths were specially trained for their business in life, and the difficulties of the career came upon them gradually. Now one-half of the laborers in any department of industry have entered it in some sudden way, and industry has become a general melee, in which those who can by effort accomplish the greater results are counted successful. The effortless, though not always least capable, are vanquished.

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THE honeymoon cannot last for ever; and to all men there comes a point in their lives where they have to decide whether the amenities, and courtesies, and sweetness, which characterized the early days of their affection, shall be continued, or whether it shall be given up, and harsh comment, and speech, and thought, and feeling shall pervade the life. To some of us, perhaps, the time has come, and we have not decided rightly, and harshness has crept into that which had been perfect melody, and there has been chronic discord in our family circle. Reform your conduct, husbands, if you have lapsed from that sweet era. Forbearance is the keystone of married life. There can be no discord, there can be no large divergencies from tunefulness so long as the husband forbears and the wife forbears. The temper should be kept under perfect control.

—

FEW people know that the Declaration of Independence is kept in the library of the State Department. It is in a cherry case under glass. But the doors are open all day long, and strong rays of light are eating up its ink day by day. The Constitution is written on parchment. The text of it is in a hand as fine as copperplate, and the ink of this part can still be plainly read. The signatures, however, are written in a different ink, and they are very fast disappearing under the action of the light. The bold signature of John Hancock is faded almost entirely out. Only J, o, h and H remain. Two lines of names are entirely removed from the paper; not a vestige of ink remains to show that names were ever there. Ben Franklin's name is entirely gone. Roger Sherman's name is fast fading. The name of Thomas Jefferson is missing, and Eldredge Gerry has lost its last syllable. Charles Carroll and John Adams have been scoured off by the light, and only eleven names out of the fifty odd can be read without a microscope. Just below the Constitution lies the original of it in Jefferson's handwriting. It is on foolscap paper, yellow with age, and worn through where the manuscript has been folded. The writing is fine and close, and the whole Constitution occupies but two pages. The ink is good, and remains as fresh as when it left the quill of Jefferson over 100 years ago. It is full of erasures and interlineations, some in Franklin's handwriting, and others in the strong script of John Adams.

THE MIRACLE.

At night all bare of verdure
The hill and meadow lay:
The brook beath bushes leafless
Went rapid on its way.

A few short hours I left them:
Lo! when I came again,
The brook, slow threads of silver,
Wound down a leafy lane.

The hill was green and shining
With turf of tender blade,
And blossoms in the meadow
A gay mosaic made.

If I had staid and waited,
And watched there day and night
No secret of their magic
Could I have brought to light.

Oh! miracle most splendid,
Oh! magic all divine,
Of which our learned dulness
But encumbers the sign.

How dare we speak it lightly,
As name of common thing,
The name of this great miracle,
The miracle of spring.

Coming Together.

BY J. O.

"YOU shall marry Godfrey Marsh, Marcia," Mrs. Stanhope said, setting her teeth together in that grim fashion of hers, which told that her mind was fully made up.

"He is rich; he can give you a home second to none in all the country round; he can give you position and influence."

"I don't want a home if I've got to marry for that, and nothing else," answered Marcia, bitterly. "I don't care for all the position and influence Godfrey Marsh can give me, if I have got to accept him with them. I hate him. If I married him, I would not live with him a year."

"You are a foolish girl," her mother answered, sternly. "a very foolish girl. There isn't another girl in Hilbury that wouldn't jump at the chance you have, and I don't think you will let it slip out of your hands when you think it over as a sensible girl should."

"I shall never change my mind," answered Marcia, with something of her mother's grim determination in her voice. "Never."

"You are thinking of Richard Gresham, of course," sneered Mrs. Stanhope. "He is a much more desirable fellow than Godfrey Marsh, I suppose?

"I infer that you would not hesitate to accept the position and influence he could give you, as Mrs. Gresham."

"I have never said anything of the kind," answered Marcia, with a rising flush. "He has never asked me to say anything of the kind, and I certainly shall wait till I am asked.

"Gresham is an honest, respectable man, and the peer of Godfrey Marsh in every way. Godfrey Marsh's money I count out of the question entirely."

"I understand how the case stands," said Mrs. Stanhope, sternly. "I have told you before, and I repeat it again, that you may understand me fully—never, with my consent, shall you marry Richard Gresham. I don't believe he cares half as much for you as you do for him. If he does, he doesn't show it as most men are apt to do, and you will save a good deal of gossip if you keep your fancy for him a little more to yourself. People are not blind."

And then Mrs. Stanhope went out, and Marcia sat and thought.

Those last words of her mother's might hold a good deal of truth in them.

She had sometimes wondered if Richard Gresham did care for her as she acknowledged to herself that she cared for him.

He was not like most men.

Perhaps he was waiting to be sure of his own heart and of her regard for him.

She had been with him a good deal.

She had wondered more than once if he loved her.

If he did, he had never told her so. She believed he did, however.

There was the rattle of carriage wheels at the gate.

She looked out with a frown gathering on her face.

She knew who was there well enough.

"Is Marcia at home?" she heard Godfrey Marsh ask her mother. "If she is, I should like to take her out for a drive this afternoon."

"Yes," she heard her mother reply. "She will be delighted to go. I will call her."

"I won't go," she thought, hurriedly, with a little angry gesture.

Then she thought better of that decision. It would offend her mother if she refused, and their life was not a very harmonious one of late, and perhaps Gresham might see them, and conclude to speak out.

So she got ready and went.

While she was gone, Richard Gresham came to see her.

Mrs. Stanhope met him coldly, but politely.

He inquired for Marcia.

"She has gone out for a ride with Godfrey Marsh," Mrs Stanhope answered, with an inward chuckle at the discomfited look on Richard's face.

"I am very sorry," he said. "I wanted to see her very much. I am going away this evening, and I do not know how long I shall be gone, nor how far I shall go. I wanted to say something to her before I went."

He knew that Mrs. Stanhope hated him.

He felt it.

But he was frank and honest with her.

"I can't say when she will be back," Mrs. Gresham said. "I think Mr. Marsh expects her to stop to tea. From that, I infer that they will be gone the best part of the afternoon."

"Yes, quite likely," answered Richard, absently. "I shall not see her, then. But I might write what I wanted to say, and leave it for you to give her."

"Yes, you could do that," she said; you will find pen and paper in the secretary there."

"It's the best I can do,' he thought. "I'd much rather have said it, but if I can't do that, I will have to do the next best thing."

He wrote down what he came to say to Marcia Stanhope, and sealed it in an envelope, upon which he wrote her name.

"If you will give it to her," he said, laying it down upon the table by Mrs. Stanhope, "you will be doing me a favor. I had rather not tell you what I have written, though, perhaps, you have a right to know. Marcia may tell you."

Then he said good-bye and went away.

"I have a right to know, according to his own admission," Mrs. Stanhope said, and tore open the envelope.

She read his letter through carefully.

"I think fate is playing into my hands," she said, grimly. "It will be a long time before your letter is answered, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Gresham."

She went to the old clock in the corner, opened it, and dropped the letter down into its mysterious depths.

"There," she said, shutting the door upon its secret, "that is disposed of safely, I think."

The next morning she spoke up suddenly to Marcia.

"Richard Gresham was here yesterday to see you. He said he was going away last night, and didn't know how far he was going, nor how long he should be gone. He told me to wish you good-bye for him."

"That was all?"

Marcia said it sharply, as if the words cost her a great effort.

Her face was very pale.

"Yes, that was all," answered Mrs. Stanhope.

"He never cared for me, I'm sure," Marcia whispered to her pillow that night, and then cried herself to sleep.

* * * * * *

It was a pleasant afternoon in October when Mrs. Stanhope died.

The sky was full of dreamy vagueness—a haze through which the sunshine filtered goldenly, and made the hills seem like the hills of some ghostly land.

The leaves of the old chestnut by the door were dropping softly and with a slow rustle that kept time to the ticking of the old clock in the corner.

Mrs. Stanhope had been failing slowly for years.

Her life had faded as the day fades; you scarcely can tell that the light is going out, but the first you know it is gone.

It was so with her.

The light was almost gone out, now.

It only flickered for a moment, then there would be darkness.

"Marcia," she said, faintly.

"Well, mother?"

"There is something I want to tell you. I ought to have told you long ago. Richard Gresham left a letter for you when he went away. I read it, and hid it in the old clock. It is there yet. When I am gone, find it and read it, but not till then, Marcia."

She looked up pleadingly into Marcia's face.

"No, not till then," Marcia promised, with a strange feeling of expectancy, regret and anger at heart.

What did that hidden letter have to say? she wondered.

Perhaps—and then she tried to put all thought of it out of her head until the time came for her to know what Richard had had to say.

But she could not do that.

By-and-bye Mrs. Stanhope said she wanted to go to sleep.

Marcia arranged her pillows, and the sick woman closed her eyes wearily.

She slept long and well, for she never woke again.

* * * * * *

The funeral was over.

And then came that awful sense of desolation which follows "after the burial."

Whoever has passed through this experience of life can never forget the dreary loneliness, of solemn silence that is about the house.

The world seems to have stopped for a little time.

Tick, tick!

The old clock kept repeating that night, and Marcia went to it to solve the mystery it held.

She took off the old door, and removed the curiously-carved front.

In the bottom, covered with the dust of fifteen years, she found the letter she had never known of for so long.

She read it through with a curious blending of pleasure to know that Richard had loved her, and bitter regret for what she had lost.

If she had only known then,

Now her life must go on as it had gone so long, but she should have it to think of that he loved her.

She laid her head down against the old clock, and cried softly.

His love would have been so sweet.

It would have made life so pleasant.

But—it was lost.

It had been lost for fifteen years.

There was a knock at the door.

She got up, drying her eyes hastily, and went to admit her visitor, hardly conscious of what she was doing, but acting more from force of habit than anything else.

A man stood on the threshold.

"Marcia," he said, and held out his hand. "You dont know me, I suppose. I am Richard Gresham. I came back to-day. I heard of your mother's death, and I knew you'd be lonesome, and I thought perhaps you'd like to see an old friend, so I made bold to come."

"Oh, Richard," she cried, and then broke down in true woman fashion. "I wonder who sent you here to-night? I have just found the letter you wrote and left for me before you went away. I never knew there had been one till five days ago. You can't blame me for not writing as you asked me to."

And then the face of this woman, whose years were thirty-five, and out of whose heart you would have supposed all girlish romance had fled, grew suddenly hot with sweet shame to think of what her words meant.

"God sent me, I suppose," he said, with a great gladness in his face, and he caught her to his heart, and kissed her. "I was sure you loved me, Marcia, but the letter I looked for never came, and I thought your mother had got you to thinking as she did. So I gave up hoping for that which I took it for granted I had lost, and I stayed away because there was nothing to draw me back here. A month ago I got it into my head that I wanted to see Hilbury again, and I came back. They told me that you were Marcia Stanhope yet, and I think that set me hoping a little. You see, it's hard to give up hoping in the first place, and it don't take much to set a man hoping again, after he thinks he's given it up, for he can't forget."

And so, after fifteen years, the old clock gave its secret up, and two hearts came together never to be parted more.

At The Window.

BY BERTIE BAYLE.

"AUNT MAYFAIR is dangerously ill and wants me to go to her at once," said Hilda Hemans, as she seated herself at the breakfast-table one bright winter's morning.

"Then, my little girl, I suppose he must try to spare you, but I do not know what will become of us all without your active hands and bright smiles," replied her father.

Well might Mr. Hemans look grave at the prospect of losing the services of his eldest daughter.

His wife had been dead three years, and Hilda had supplied as far as it was possible her mother's place in the household.

She had bravely renounced the ordinary pleasures of a young girl's life to educate and care for her five little brothers and sisters.

She was housekeeper too; and though her father's means were limited, had contrived to make their home truly happy and comfortable.

A brave heroine of the right sort was Hilda, fulfilling woman's highest mission—the daily round of uncongenial duties performed in a loving, cheery spirit, quiet, unceasing, entire sacrifice of self; such a woman as is only really appreciated when her absence has left a void which no other can fill in either heart or home.

Mr. Hemans regretfully bade his daughter good-bye, as he saw her that same morning leave for her aunt's house.

Mrs. Mayfair lived in an old-fashioned, rambling building, partly surrounded by trees.

A well-kept garden separated the house from the road, and at the rear there extended large orchards.

Everything in the house was old and quaint as the architecture.

The air of the place showed that Margaret was a woman of wealth and peculiar tastes.

Hilda's arrival at Leon House seemed to instantly remove the gloom that hung over it.

She was a little sunbeam, and deservedly her aunt's favorite niece.

Margaret Mayfair was weak and feeble to the last degree, and when Hilda entered her room she found her propped up assiduously with a formidable array of elder-down pillows before a small table.

Despite the deep interest which Hilda took in the invalid, the transformation which had taken place in her bedroom since her last visit, attracted her attention and excited in her considerable curiosity.

The bedroom had in fact been turned into a museum of valuable ornaments.

Close by her aunt's side stood a small old-fashioned cabinet, the contents of which delighted and surprised the unsophisticated young girl.

In the open drawers lay treasures she had hitherto dreamed of, but had never seen.

Flashing back the pale winter sunlight and mellowing its radiance were strings of pearls such as Eastern beauties love to entwine amongst their dark tresses.

In other drawers were curiously bright-looking ornaments in rococo, which would have rejoiced the heart of an antiquary.

Gold chains, delicately-carved silver filagree; rare diamonds also flashed from massive gold settings.

A fortune had been sunk in these jewels which it was thought was safely invested in Consols.

All this show was a perfect mystery to Hilda.

She thought she knew every nook and cranny in Leon House.

Yet the sweet, mild, silver-haired old lady had so well kept her treasures secret that none of her own family even suspected their existence.

With a pleased smile the old lady watched Hilda examine each article in a way which showed how fully she admired them.

Then she said—

"When I am gone, dear little niece, these will be all yours. This is the fortune I leave you, and you well deserve it."

Hilda remained speechless with astonishment for a few moments.

Then she threw her arms round the old lady's neck and murmured her thanks.

A little later on, while the jewels were sparkling on the table, and her aunt related how she had become possessed of them, her niece, with natural curiosity, wished to know why she had kept them so secretly.

"I loved my jewels Hilda, and gazed on them each day with renewed pleasure; but I knew that I should stand in the greatest possible danger of being robbed were it known that I owned them.

"I acted, therefore, on the principle, that if the secret was not worth my keeping, it was not worth anybody else's while to keep it.

"Still, before, I died, I wished to give myself the pleasure of showing you the treasure which will soon be your own."

Hilda clasped her aunt's hand, and the two remained silently absorbed in thought.

Twilight was fast enveloping the house in an unusually soft winter gloom.

A blazing fire threw its radiance over the sick chamber, lighting up now its occupants, now its treasures.

Had not death been hovering near, the light and wealth inside would have contrasted pleasantly with the dreary landscape stretching away for miles around.

Margaret's room, owing to her illness, was furnished as bed-room and sitting-room.

There were two windows, both reaching to the ground.

Hilda sat opposite to one of these opening out into the garden.

Suddenly a slight, hardly perceptible sound startled her, and she raised her eyes.

Her surprise and terror were so great that she could not repress the cry which escaped her lips.

"Ah, aunt, there is a dreadful face at the window! We have been watched!"

Hilda's terror was perfectly natural.

The apparition which frightened her might even have made a more courageous girl tremble.

An ill-looking, jagged face, with large prominent eyes and flashing eyeballs, and surrounded by that amount of shaggy, unkempt hair, which often denotes the reckless villain, had peered through the window with a lightning glance, which, in one moment, plainly told his purpose.

The man had appeared suddenly and as suddenly withdrew.

The first tremor of fear passed. Hilda rang loudly for the servant.

A few hurried words explained the situation, and John, the servant, darted out into the garden in pursuit.

Suspense and anxiety for her aunt agitated Hilda.

Then a new fear rushed in upon her.

The man must have seen the jewels.

If so, an attack might be expected at any moment.

Loud voices in the hall and the tramp of heavy footsteps increased indefinitely the agitation of the girl.

"It's only Luke Jones, miss," said the servant, after he had reached the door of the bed-room. "Here he is."

"I only come to ask about the old lady," said the unkempt Luke, boldly. "I liked to hear how she was gettin' on."

A short lecture from Hilda about giving people frights by coming at unseemly hours to the windows of private rooms, dismissed Luke from her presence, and immediately after, the fellow was shown out through the back door.

The cause of this sudden alarm had been at one time one of Margaret's servants, and had been sent off for evasion, lying, and suspicion of dishonesty.

A few hours later Mrs. Mayfair became restless, and feeling tired of her own chamber, would not be satisfied unless she were removed to an old-fashioned room at the other end of her house.

This chamber had many doors, many windows, many cupboards, many crannies.

No one had occupied it since the death of George Mayfair, Margaret's husband.

Thither Margaret had to be removed, and she would have no one to sit up with her but Hilda.

Meanwhile all the jewels were put away carefully.

Midnight had passed, and the inmates were in profound slumber.

After the doctor's usual call every effort was made to give Margaret the quiet which should induce sleep.

"Rest," said the doctor, "is the one essential thing for her now. Three hours' sleep may save her life. Upon no account let her be disturbed."

Hilda watched over her aunt lovingly, wrapped in one of the old lady's rich cashmere shawls.

Perfect, death-like silence reigned in the room.

All at once a heavy snoring caused her to lift her head from the book she was reading.

Hilda would have raised an alarm but for the doctor's injunction.

It was evident that there was someone hidden in the cupboard, and no person could be there but with an evil purpose.

The man's face at the window returned vividly to her fancy, and something told her he was the sleeper.

Hilda's eyes as they wandered round the

room in despair, rested upon a small bottle of chloroform.

A moment's thought determined her to use it.

Saturating a handkerchief with a portion of it, she opened the cupboard door quietly and applied the narcotic to the fellow who slept there doubled up as if he was in a basket.

Then she closed the door again, and crept silently back to her chair near the fireplace.

As the minutes passed she watched the face of her aunt with breathless anxiety and a beating heart.

The snoring had ceased; but how long would it be so?

So two hours of mortal terror and heroic resolve were passed by Hilda.

At last a heavy sigh from Margaret, followed by a sudden movement of her hands, showed that the old lady had just awoke.

To remove her from the room was her niece's first thought.

"I am better, Hilda," she said. "But I feel so cold."

"The room is damp, and very dangerous for you. Everything is so long out of use in it."

"Then better get on to my own room at once. You are so good and thoughtful."

With gentle hands, Hilda saw two servants remove the invalid back to her own apartment.

And then following the domestics, she beckoned them to come after her.

To their surprise they found in the cupboard the long suspected Luke, lying in an unconscious condition.

Hilda charged them to watch him carefully, and when he awoke to secure and pinion him.

Her instructions were carried out faithfully, and the burglar was handed over to the authorities.

The villian had been prowling about the house the afternoon on which he had frightened Hilda with a view of robbery.

The sight of the jewels had stimulated his cupidity.

After pretending to leave the house, he had returned through a side entrance, crept up-stairs, and hidden himself away in the disused chamber, meaning to carry off the jewels during the night.

The cold had caused him while waiting, to take frequent draughts from a brandy flask he kept in his pocket, and the powerful spirit had rendered him drunk and thrown him into a profound slumber.

Mrs. Mayfair rallied temporarily, and when strong enough to hear of the attempted robbery of her jewls, was told of Hilda's thoughtfulness, foresight, and courage in the whole affair.

The dangers to which she saw she had exposed herself and her niece by keeping so many valuables in her house appeared to her in their true colors.

She strongly reproached herself with having exposed Hilda's life to danger for the indulgence of a capricious fancy.

A sale of the jewels was determined upon, a few only being preserved because of the special favor with which they were regarded.

A few months afterwards Margaret Mayfair, who had never ceased to regret the loss of her treasures, passed away in Hilda's arms, and left her favorite niece her sole heiress.

Stanton's Choice.

BY ANNABEL GRAY.

I TELL you Uncle John, I can't afford it. Girls nowadays are so extravagant, that it fairly terrifies any man contemplating matrimony. There is your favorite, Miss Hartley; she declared to me in strictest confidence, last evening, that she couldn't imagine how any one could exist without the opera. And not a week ago I know of her mentioning an Indian shawl as a positive necessity for a lady's wardrobe."

"More girlish exaggeration, Will. She has always had a rich father to pay her bills."

"And naturally will expect a rich husband to do the same. If I had Mr. Hartley's bank account, the matter would be different; but though my salary is good, my income, independent of that, is small. If I provide Indian shawls and opera tickets without limit to the future Mrs. Stanton, I would run in debt. Now I am quite resolved to save a little every year till I own a home, and can start in business for myself."

"A good wife would help you, Will?"

"But where is she to be found?"

John chuckled a little at the idea of his ever giving information on the subject, and the gentlemen having finished their preparations for departure, started for their place of business.

John was the cashier, and his nephew clerk in a large firm, but the elder gentleman possessing ample means, employed his time, not from necessity, but from a horror of idleness.

Handsome, well connected, and well educated, Will Stanton was a favorite in society.

Many a girlish heart fluttered when he drew near.

On the morning when the gentlemen held the conversation recorded, Will found his services required as a salesman, owing to the illness of one of the men in the silk department.

Two ladies, young and pretty, required his services at once.

"Evening silks, if you please," said one, a tall, very stylish-looking girl, dressed in exquisite taste, and with rich garments "Show me some of the new shades."

Several pieces of the shining fabric were unrolled, and Will noted the fact that both ladies seemed equally interested in the choice, but the companion of the stylish girl who had first spoken was far more quiet than her friend, in voice, manner, and dress.

Will's experienced eyes told him that the cost was less than half of her companion's, and yet she seemed equally well-dressed, while her appearance was lady-like and refined.

"Oh, Vinnie," said her companion, "this shade will suit you perfectly. I am not fair enough to wear it, but it is a lovely tint for a blonde. Don't look any further."

"I am not going to get a new dress, Marcia."

"Not get a new silk for Mrs. Hartley's party? Why, Vin, it will be one of the most dressy occasions of the season. You have never been at one of Floy Hartley's parties?"

"No; Miss Hartley is a recent acquaintance."

"Then take my advice and get a handsome dress. You have no idea how much they dress there."

"I can't afford it, Marcia."

"Oh, nonsense!"

"But it is a fact. My allowance will not last me until spring unless I am very economical."

"As if your father would not give you twenty new dresses if you asked for them."

"I know he would, but he gives me a liberal allowance, and I find it sufficient."

The above conversation carried on in a low tone, was apparently unheard by the smiling clerk, whose quick ear had, however, caught every word of it.

He looked again at the sweet-faced little lady, resolving that Floy Hartley should introduce him at the party for which his card of invitation had already been received.

"Come, Vinnie, give me the benefit of your taste," said Marcia; "I am tired of all the bright colors that suit my style of beauty. Is there not one of those delicate tints that I could wear?"

"The peach blossom, Marcia, with black lace. If you will come over, I will show you a new fold for trimming."

"Oh, Madame B——will make it up handsomely. I never make an evening dress, do you?"

"I make all my dresses. I took lessons of a first-rate dressmaker on purpose."

"You like the peach-blossom?"

"I do," holding it against her companion's shoulder. "It is certainly becoming. Not so glaring as a pink, but as pretty. Your black lace overdress will be lovely with it."

"I shall have an overskirt of the same, with a new thread lace trimming. I tossed pa out of a new dress this morning, and I mean to have the full benefit of his generosity. Twenty-five yards," she added, to the clerk, and Will measured off the dress.

He saw the ladies going from counter to counter, and the hour being still early, had leisure to saunter about a little, marking Vinnie's purchase of blue ribbons and her care in selecting what was of good quality, her selection of gloves, and her unselfish interest in all her friend's purchases, from the dress and thread lace to the gloves and a costly web of a handkerchief.

Evidently Miss Marcia intended that her father should indeed supply an entire new dress.

There was a discussion over some new fans, a recent importation exquisitely displayed by a clerk.

Vinnie's quiet "can't afford it," was proof against temptation, but Marcia added a white feather or fan of dainty beauty to her list of purchases.

Floy Hartley was rather surprised that Will Stanton, who was a favorite of her father's while she had won his uncle's heart, never paid her those marked attentions that were so evidently the desire of the old gentleman.

But her surprise was changed to chagrin when he asked a special introduction to Miss Vinnie Holway, and was that young lady's devoted cavalier for the evening of Miss Hartley's party.

"The young lady in white with blue ribbons?" she had said in answer to his request; "that is Miss Holway, a schoolmate of Marcia Livingstone's. I have met her at the Livingstone's, but am not well acquainted. Marcia tells me her father is well off, but has a very large family."

All of this Will found later was quite true.

There was a large family, and Vinnie was the very sunshine of home.

Well educated herself, she was always ready to assist the younger ones in their studies.

With nimble fingers, trained to work, she saved her father many pounds by her ability to cut and fit dresses, and the willingness to impart some of her knowledge to her sisters.

A neat housekeeper, she spared her mother many an hour for visiting, reading, or rest.

And yet she was no drudge.

In society she was always appropriately and tastefully dressed.

She was a good pianist, and sang well in a clear cultivated voice.

She was well read and kept up an intelligent interest in all current topics, conversing easily, though modestly.

Will found that every visit to Mr. Holway's increased his distaste for single life, and his love was pretty Vinnie Holway, till he found himself in serious consultation with his uncle again.

"So it is not my pet Floy Hartley," said the old gentleman. "It would serve you right if I married her myself."

"I will give my consent," said Will smilingly.

"No, my boy, no! You and your pretty Vinnie must fill my old heart, as you have promised me a corner in your home long years ago. Will, when my hair was as brown as your own, and my eyes as bright, I, too, had my love dream.

"I was a country boy then, and to own a farm was the very height of my ambition. I was working hard for a farmer named Nelson, for I had no parents, when there came to visit my employer a cousin from the city.

"The advent of Josephine Nelson was an event in our village, and her beauty and grace were fully appreciated by all around her.

"Working on her cousin's farm, I was constantly near her. I drove her if she wished to see the surrounding scenery, and as we jolted over the rough country roads, she told me of the great city, of the openings there for energy, industry, and talent.

"She found I was fond of reading, and lent me volumes she had brought with her. We read together; we walked together in shaded lanes, and I gathered wild flowers which she wore in her bosom and hair.

"To make a long story short, Will, I loved her with all the wild enthusiasm of a boy, and the mature reason of a man. She was far above me in grace, in beauty and goodness, but she was gentle as she was fair modest and tender."

"When I told her my love, she laid her little white hands in my rough brown ones, and promised to be my wife."

"Then she went home to the city, and I added shilling after shilling to my board, to follow her.

"Mr. Nelson wrote to Josephine's father for me, and he promised me a place in his counting-house.

"Then I found out why my suit was favored, why no cross was laid upon my darling's love.

"I had thought her pale delicate beauty was only the city's refinement, compared with the robust charms of our country lasses.

"I found that it was the beauty of that scourge of cities—consumption.

"Her parents knew my darling could not live to be my bride, but because she had given me the treasure of her love, they made me welcome as a son in their home.

"I spent my days in the counting-house of Mr. Nelson, my evenings with Josephine.

"Slowly she faded before my longing eyes, growing weaker and weaker, till she died, clasping my hand in hers.

"That was forty years ago, Will, but I have loved no woman since.

"I will keep faith with Josephine till we meet in heaven.

"When I die, Will, all I have will be yours, but bury this with me."

As he spoke, he put a small locket that had been hidden in his bosom, into Will's hands.

Opening it disclosed the face of a very beautiful woman.

At the sight of it Will cried—

"How much like Flo Hartley!"

"Mrs. Hartley is Josephine's sister," said John quietly. "Now you know why I am so fond of Flo."

There was a long silence, and Uncle John knew by Will's face and the firm grasp of his hand that his story had fallen upon sympathising affection.

"Come," he said cheerfully, after a long pause. "If Miss Holway has actually accepted you, I must see about a wedding present."

"She actually has," said Will.

But when the wedding day was fixed, and Will consulted his uncle about a house, he was informed that Mrs. Stanton's wedding-present from her new uncle would be a neat house, fully furnished, including one room reserved for Uncle John.

There are children's voices now in the handsome house, and Uncle John has stood god-father to a sturdy namesake.

The sun of prosperity shines upon Will, but he says his business success, his happy home, his freedom from worldly perplexities, have all depended upon the good sense of his wife, who, in all expenditures, all charities, first considers whether or not she can afford the outlay; and while she is liberal and large-hearted, is never ashamed to exercise economy, if necessary, or to decline an extravagance.

Lives Prolonged.

Many to whom no encouragement could be offered, disease having progressed so far that no chance of arresting it seemed to remain, having been promptly relieved, and their lives prolonged and rendered comparatively comfortable, by the new Vitalizing Treatment of Drs. Starkey & Palen, 1109 Girard St., Philadelphia. Many more, who have been sufferers for years and almost incapacitated for work, are now in the enjoyment of a good degree of health and able to engage actively in the business, profession, or household duties which had been wholly or partially abandoned. It is wonderful what cures in so called "desperate cases," are being made by this remarkable Treatment! If any one, requiring the aid of such a treatment, will write to Drs. Starkey & Palen, they will promptly mail such documents and reports of cases as will enable him to judge of its value for himself.

The Taunt Avenged.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

THE red glow of sunset threw its long, quivering lances of light athwart snowy fields, leafless copses, and sluggish streams, fast bound in steely links of ice.

The rooks cawed mournfully in the trees, and in the distance the village church spire rose up like a picturesque glimpse out of some painted landscape.

And the peal of bells was scarcely sweeter than Flora Landis's voice, as she sprang lightly from the chaise to the door-step.

"I have enjoyed my ride so much, Mr. Dallas! And you won't forget to come to-morrow with the new book you were telling me of?"

Carrie Swindon, a tall, spare girl of a very uncertain age, had looked soberly on from behind the window-curtains, and when Flora tripped in, with eyes sparkling like hazel stars, and cheeks flushed a soft, peachy bloom, she met her with severe dignity.

"Flora, you ought not to do that."

"Ought not to do what?"

"To encourage that young man."

"Oh, fiddlesticks!" said Flora, twisting her bow and throwing it carelessly on the table. "One must amuse one's self somehow, and it's dull here."

"But it isn't fair, either to Reuben Dallas or to Dr. May."

Flora made up her scarlet mouth into a grimace expressive of the utmost contempt.

"Don't interfere, please, Carrie. Both the gentlemen you mention are quite able to take care of themselves."

Carrie Swindon bit her lip.

"No one would take you to be an engaged girl, Flora."

"Wouldn't they?"

"And certainly it is scarcely a creditable course of conduct, this which you are pursuing."

"Who made you my preceptress, Carrie?" saucily demanded Miss Landis. "What a muff you are, to be sure! Don't you know I was engaged to two gentlemen at a time for six months, once? It was such fun! Rings—bouquets—all the new novels, and kid gloves by the box, fresh from Paris. But one day they both happened to come at the same time, and my little game was played out."

"Flora!"

"Girls all do it, Carrie. All city girls, I mean. You poor country aborigines can't of course, be expected to be up to the time. But since I have been engaged to Dr. May, who has rather a jealous streak in his composition, I've been somewhat out of practice, I must allow—and this rural schoolmaster is excellent fun!"

"But, Flora, he thinks you are in earnest," remonstrated Carrie Swindon.

"Well let him. He'll get over it. I'm sure the men are merciless enough in their flirtations with us poor girls."

"And I suppose you never think of how you may be spoiling the chances of other girls," added Carrie, somewhat bitterly.

"I'm not spoiling yours, at any rate," retorted Flora. "For if ever there was an old maid beyond the reach of help, you are one."

Carrie reddened, and tossed her head.

It was quite true, this speech of beautiful Flora Landis', but it was none the pleasanter to hear.

And when Flora shot that poisoned arrow, it was the greatest mistake she ever made in her life, for it transformed Carrie into her bitterest enemy.

Flora Landis was spending a few winter weeks at the home of her father's distant cousin.

And, in the meantime, she amused herself by a tranquil little flirtation with Reuben Dallas.

But it were better far that she had not hurled that last tempting taunt at her mature cousin, for, as she sat before the fire that night in ruby merino, with a delicate lace puffing at her throat, and rings glittering on her plump, rose-tipped fingers, luxuriously dreaming over the volume of Lalla Rookh in her lap, Carrie had already laid the first stone of the edifice of her ruin.

"Where's Carrie?" said she, looking sleepily up.

"Gone to one of the neighbors, I believe," said Mrs. Swindon, who was already heartily tired of her city guest.

* * * * * *

"She told me so herself—makes no secret whatever of it," said Miss Swindon, in mysterious confab with Effie Dallas, the schoolmaster's sister.

"How dares she," cried Effie, with flashing eyes and deep-dyed cheeks, "to trifle with one so good and noble as Reuben?"

"My dear, these coquettes stop at nothing," said Carrie, vindictively.

"And Reuben is wearing her ring, and she has got his seal that papa left him in his will.

"And of course Reuben supposes that it amounts to an engagement. Oh, Carrie! what ought I to do?"

"You can do nothing," said Carrie.

"But I can—I must. Am I to sit tamely by and see my brother's happiness wrecked? What is the name of this man she is engaged to? What is his address?"

"You would never go to see him?"

"I would do anything to save Reuben. I was going to London on Monday. I can easily see her lover then, and warn him of the fatal mischief she is doing. Am I not justified in using any weapons in Reuben's behalf?"

"But," cried, Carrie with glittering eyes of triumph, "you will not tell Reuben?"

"Of course not. Do you suppose any testimony could make him believe her anything less than an angel of light?"

And so, upon the Monday following, Effie Dallas took the train to London, and went straight to Dr. May's.

He rose at her entrance—a tall, gentlemanly man.

"I am not a patient, sir," said Effie, coloring and feeling her heart throb. "I am only Effie Dallas from Park, where Flora Landis is staying."

"Sit down," said Dr. May, looking intently at her. "Do not hurry yourself. What is it that you have got to tell me?"

"Only," said Effie, making a resolute effort to overcome the lump in her throat, "that Miss Flora is—is allowing my brother Reuben to believe that he is very dear to her."

And she told her story, with all a sister's [illegible].

Dr. May listened quietly.

"This is strange," said he; "very strange. Of course, it is not a pleasant hearing to me—but I can appreciate your motives, Miss Dallas, and I honor your courage and spirit. I will go to Park myself, to-morrow!"

* * * * * *

"Dearest Reuben, you know that I love you."

It was a pretty *tableau* in Mrs. Swindon's parlor, in the twilight—pretty Flora, with her head on Reuben Dallas's shoulder, her hand reposing in his.

She liked love-making in the abstract, and she was sufficiently practised in the trade to know that there were ways of slipping clear of all blame and responsibility, whenever she should get tired of the pastime.

Except in extreme cases, such as the present, for treacherous Carrie Swindon, opening the door without ceremony, Dr. May walked in.

Flora gave a shriek.

Reuben himself started back, rather [illegible].

"I fear that I am intruding," said Dr. May, with great composure. "Are you engaged to this young lady, sir?" turning to Reuben.

"Certainly I am," said the young man.

"In that case, I may as well withdraw my claims," said Dr. May. "Here is your ring, Miss Landis. Your letters shall be returned at my earliest convenience."

"But Emerson——" faltered Flora.

"Further discussion would only be painful," said May. "If I am to believe the evidence of my own senses, you will easily console yourself for my defection."

"Flora," cried Dallas, as the tall, young physician disappeared, "is this true? Were you really engaged to this—this other man?"

But Flora Landis only answered him by sobs and tears and strong indications of hysterics.

"Go away," cried Flora. "Dear me! it's all your fault."

"My fault!" echoed the astonished lover.

"And I wouldn't marry you if there wasn't another man in the world," went on the excited girl, "I did love Emerson May, and now I have lost him."

"And serves you right," said Carrie Swindon to herself as she hurried to the rescue with smelling salts.

That was Flora's last flirtation.

She had come to the conclusion that it didn't pay; and the next year she married a grey-haired old widower, as jealous as Bluebeard.

And report does say that Dr. May is engaged to little Effie Dallas.

The Widow's Mystery.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

MRS NELLY ARCHER was one of the prettiest little widows that ever looked fascinating in the flutter of black ribbons and transparent crape; yet, somehow, no one was ever jealous of the affectionate, warm-hearted, beautiful young widow.

For was she not ready to help the helpless, care for the careless, and think for the thoughtless?

You couldn't help wondering what people did in the benighted times before Mrs. Nelly Archer came on to the stage of life, so indispensable did she seem to human comfort.

So, of course, the very evening of the day that Miss Mildred Wilton became engaged to Henry Forrest, she came up through the evening twilight, with incense of flowers scattered on her path, to tell Nelly about it. It was just as natural as thinking aloud.

"In love, you dear foolish thing!" said Mrs. Nelly, laughingly, imprisoning both of Mildred's fluttering hands, and looking [illegible], the [illegible] fringes of [illegible] eyes. "Well, every young girl must come, sooner or later, to the place where some happy youth becomes glorified in her sight, and his words are like the law and the prophets. May you never awake from the blissful dream, I say!"

* * * * *

"It [illegible], somehow!"

The moon, which had been a narrow slit of pearl when Harry Forrest first whispered his love into Mildred's willing ear, was in its sickly globous now; and poor Mildred was crying on Mrs. Nelly Archer's shoulder.

"How, dearest?" said Nelly, stroking the dark, dishevelled locks, while she pressed her cool cheek against Mildred's burning [illegible] head.

"He is so grave and self-absorbed; and when he looks at me, it is with such a pitying glance.

"And two or three times some unspoken sentence has quivered on his lips. Nelly, do you suppose—can it be possible?—that he has ceased to love me, and wishes to be released from our engagement?"

"Not a bit of it, love! Don't distress your dear little head; it will all come right, I am sure. You know that money affairs are in a very critical state just now, [illegible] business men are necessarily anxious," replied Mrs. Archer.

"Do you think that is all?" murmured Mildred, gradually hushing her sobs, and drawing closer to her comforter, as a child distressed by sorrowful dreams clings to its soothing nurse.

"Of course it is! [illegible] grow[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

Our Young Folks.

BOASTFUL BEN.

BY PIPKIN.

BEN BIGGS was the most wonderful boy that ever lived.

He could lift a greater weight, jump a greater height, run faster, throw further, climb higher, learn more quickly, and write more beautifully, than any other boy that the village, or even the country, could produce.

At least, so one might judge from the wonderful things which Ben Biggs himself related.

Girls were donkeys, Ben said; they could not do anything.

And the only reason they were obedient and good was because they were afraid of being punished.

I am afraid Ben's sister, Ruth, had rather a hard time of it, but she was a good girl, and said little, though she often wished Ben would not speak to her so rudely, or be so rough in his behavior.

Now, most of the boys in the school to which Ben Biggs went were smaller than he, and as he would thrash them if they laughed at him, they said nothing, and Ben bade fair to grow up both a bully and a braggart.

But, one day, a new family came to the village, and Jack Smart, the eldest son, was sent to school for a few months till his father should settle down and have time to look round for some suitable work for Jack to do.

So Jack soon found out Ben's weakness, and laughed his brag to scorn, which made quite a breach between them, for Ben had been used to be looked up to by the boys, and resented being taken down a peg or two by a new boy.

"I'll tell you what it is, boys," said Jack, as he walked to school with two of his companions one winter's day, "Ben Biggs brags too much by half, and I move we set to work and cure him of it. You meet me after school, and we'll get Biggs to walk home with us.

"He can't go a dozen yards without boasting of something that he can do, and we'll just make him do it, or try to, and see how silly he will look."

So when school was out, Jack called out to Ben:

"Hallo, Ben, come home our way; it's not much farther for you, and there's some fine fun ahead; the pond is all frozen over, and if it holds, we mean to take a slide, I can tell you."

Ben could not resist the temptation of a slide, so he went with them, though he would much rather Jack Smart had not been there.

"We made a great big snowball in our yard last evening, didn't we, Joe?" remarked one of the boys, as they walked along.

"Not so big as the one I made last winter," said Ben.

"Oh, indeed!" said Jack, with a sly glance at his friends; "and how big was yours, Ben?"

"Oh, it was yards and yards round," answered Ben, opening his eyes very wide, "and it did not melt for months and months."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Jack, with well-feigned astonishment; "it must have been nearly midsummer then before it had all melted."

"Well," answered Ben, in an injured tone, "and so I dare say it would have been, only we broke it up to make little snowballs of, after the other snow had all left us.

"Reuben Rollins said he could throw a snowball higher than I, and I know better. I believe I could throw as high as the church-steeple."

"No doubt you could," said Jack Smart, "but as we have not time to go to the church, suppose you throw a snowball over the top of this pine tree; it is not much more than half as high as the church-steeple."

"Oh, no, not now," answered Ben, "we want to get to the ice; I'll show you another time."

"It will not take a minute, and we should all like to see it so much—should we not, boys?"

There was a general chorus of assent to this.

But Ben knew he couldn't do it, so he only quickened his pace, and looked very uncomfortable.

"Well, if you can't throw it, can you climb it?" asked Jack.

"Of course I can," said Ben, testily, "but I'm not going to stay now; I want to get to the pond."

"Oh, you can climb it!" repeated Jack; "well, perhaps you can, but it's a stiffish climb; there are no boughs till you get nearly to the top, and the trunk is a good size round. Come, Ben, let us see you climb it."

"I tell you I want to have a slide," answered Ben, in an angry manner, "and I am not going to stay now—so you needn't think it."

Jack answered never a word, but quietly whisked the cap off Ben's head and sent it whirling up into the tree, where it lodged in the branches.

At first Ben looked disconsolately at his cap.

Then he made some snowballs and tried to knock it down, but he could not throw high enough.

And each success of Jack's brought shouts of laughter from his companions, who wanted to know how tall the steeple was over which he could throw.

At length Ben gave up that plan and tried to climb.

But the trunk was rather large, and the bark slippery, and there was nothing to take hold of.

He managed to struggle up a few feet, and then down he came with a rush, burying himself in the snow, with his heels in the air, in the most ludicrous position imaginable.

At last poor Ben had to acknowledge that he could not climb the tree, and walked sullenly and silently along after his companions, wondering what his father would say when he saw him come home without a cap.

After this, it was not long before the four boys reached the pond for which they were bound.

The water was frozen from end to end, but a single glance sufficed to tell Jack Smart that the ice would not yet bear their weight.

"I don't believe it will hold," said he, standing with one foot upon the shore, and pressing the surface of the ice very cautiously with the other.

"Better not go on yet, boys," he added, after he had eyed it for a minute or two, with his hands in his pockets; "it will hold to-morrow, and then we'll have a rattling good slide."

"I've walked across when it has been much weaker than that," said Ben, as they went away.

"Have you, though?" asked Jack, stopping short. "Perhaps you would dare walk across now?"

"Dare! Of course I dare! answered Ben; "but it is not likely I am going to stand in the cold without any cap on my head. I want to get home."

Jack Smart said nothing, but whispered something to his companions, who suddenly seized hold of Ben, and had him over on his back in the snow in less than no time.

In a second Jack twitched off Ben's shoe, and before the poor boy could regain his feet, had sent it skimming along the surface of the ice, and it stopped near the centre of the pond. This was too much.

To go home with no cap and only one shoe, and hop at that!

Ben burst into tears of rage and vexation.

"What are you crying for?" asked Jack Smart. "I thought you said you could walk across?"

Ben did not answer.

He thought perhaps the ice might bear him after all.

He took one step, but it broke beneath his weight.

Fortunately the water at the edge was not above his ankles, but the shock of breaking through sent poor Ben forward upon his face.

He put out his hands to save himself, and broke the ice again, his hands going into cold water and the slime at the bottom of the pond.

Ben scrambled out in a terrible plight. His cap was gone, his hands and arms were dripping and half frozen, and one foot was minus a shoe.

What wonder if he lifted up his voice and wept!

Just then, as it chanced, Ben's sister Ruth came by on her way from the girls' school, at the other end of the village.

She saw what a plight poor Ben was in, and learned from his tormentors what had happened.

Then running to her brother, Ruth threw her arms round his neck.

"Don't cry, Ben," she said. "I will run and fetch Rover. The ice will bear him easily, and he will fetch your shoe in a minute; and we will borrow a ladder from old Giles whose cottage is close by the fir-tree, and I dare say we can get your cap with the ladder and a long bean pole."

The other three boys had now gone off home, but Ruth took a private opportunity to beg Jack Smart to be kind to Ben and encourage him in well doing.

And Jack did so, for he was a good-hearted fellow after all.

I do not think the rough lesson which Jack had given him did Ben much harm.

It is certain at any rate, that he was much less boastful after it, and that he was kinder to his sister too.

Boastfulness is an ugly habit, but Ben bids fair to get rid of it, and to learn the useful lesson that the men who do the greatest deeds talk least about men.

"TAKE SOMETHING."—Take a paper.
Take your time.
Take things easy.
Take trouble like a man.
Take comfort if you can.
Take care of your health.
Take a fortune if it's left to you.
Take pains to do your work well.
Take a hint when it is intended for you.
Take hold of any work that comes in your way rather than be an idler.
Take pains to find out both sides of a story before you come to a decision.
Take pleasure as you go along in life, unless you prefer to do without it altogether.
Take pains never to fall in love with a girl until you know what she thinks about it; it may save you from making a fool of yourself.
Take pains to further the interests of your employer if you want your employer to care for yours.
Take the sunshine sent into your life as something to be grateful for; don't darken it with shadows of your own making.
Take a cosy little flat and go on keeping at once. If the girl you are about proposing to wait for a coachmaker's foreman and three servants, let her wait, but, unless your are a flat yourself, you must wait for her.

HOW THEY MET.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

JEROME WALLACE stood leaning against a fence that enclosed a pretty cottage, and feasting his artistic eyes on one of the most beautiful landscapes he had ever beheld.

A cat came along the edge of the fence and rubbed against him after a friendly fashion; and putting his hand behind him, Jerome idly stroked Miss Pussy's coat the wrong way.

"Do let aunt's cat alone, you big lazy fellow. All you're good for is tormenting poor puss," said the pertest voice Jerome ever heard.

But if he thought the voice pert, when he turned slowly around, a look of surprise on his grave, earnest face, he thought the girl standing before him was pertness personified.

She was a slight little creature of sixteen, with a thin sallow face, lit up by a pair of clear saucy hazel eyes.

As Jerome turned around, the hazel eyes gave him one swift glance, and with an "Oh!" she retreated in confusion.

He saw at once that she had made a mistake, and in a voice that never failed to put the one addressed at their ease, he said—

"Don't let me frighten you away, miss. I was admiring the beautiful scene before me, and had no intention, I assure you, of tormenting your aunt's cat."

But it didn't take much to put Marjorie Ware at ease.

She recovered from her surprise before Jerome had finished what he was saying, and now she stepped forward, smiling up in his face.

"Well, if I didn't think you were my cousin Tom. He is always tormenting Tubby, you know."

No, Jerome didn't know, but he wished to hear this strange girl talk, and smiling down at her, he nodded his head affirmatively, and she continued—

"Tom's hair is golden and curly, just like yours, and he has great wide shoulders like you; but then," her eyes were smiling, but the little head of black curls was shaking seriously, "your faces are not the same; no, not at all the same," and the hazel eyes studied Jerome's face.

Jerome Wallace was a painter, a slave to his art, never in his life sparing enough time to give a thought to one of the opposite sex.

But now he was interested, interested before he knew it, in this strange little creature before him.

"Well, it's too bad," he said, a smile playing over his grave features, "that the resemblance should end in the curl of our hair or the width of our shoulders."

"Yes, it's too bad for you, for you're not near as handsome as Tom. Now don't feel bad about it, for we all can't be handsome, you know, and besides, I like your face ever so much better than Tom's."

"Well, that's consoling," said Jerome, with an amused expression.

"So you are admiring our landscape," and the sallow face glowed as the brilliant eyes turned to the delightful scene before them.

"That is what I like to hear. Now Tom, he never admires nature, he says, 'What's the use?' but, then, I think you would like Cousin Tom for all that, he is so good natured."

Jerome's face looked grave.

He was quite sure, now, that he would not like Cousin Tom.

"Do you like your Cousin Tom?" he asked, earnestly.

"Oh, yes, ever so much."

That answer settled all doubt in Jerome's mind.

"Tom is so awfully jolly," continued Marjorie, "too jolly, mother and aunt think, and I really believe that is why they are sending me away to that horrid school, just to keep me away from Tom."

The smile came back to Jerome's face.

He seemed pleased with mother and aunt's arrangement.

"When do you leave for school?"

"I'm to be packed off bright and early to-morrow morning."

"So soon," he said, with a look of disappointment.

"Would you like me to paint that landscape for you? I can leave it with your mother when it is finished."

"Oh, I thought you were an artist!" and she clasped her hands and looked up in his face earnestly. "If you will, I never shall forget you."

"You promise that," he said, taking the clasped hands in his, "you promise that you will never forget me?"

"I do," she said, with the same earnestness.

But as Jerome pressed her hands between his palms, all her earnestness disappeared, and she said, in the pert voice that was natural to her—

"But you mustn't get serious over it; I'm never serious, and I dislike serious people very much."

"Then if you are never serious, you do not mean what you say—you will not keep your promise."

"Oh, yes I will. Must I look as if I had buried all my friends to mean what I say?"

* * * * * * *

"Marjorie! Marjorie!" called Mary Wallace, "come, quick, and I'll show you that picture I was speaking to you about."

Marjorie Ware, no longer a slight, sallow little creature of sixteen, but a tall, graceful brilliant girl of nineteen, came tripping down the broad staircase in answer to Mary's call.

Both girls had arrived from school only a few hours before.

They had left together, and Mary insisted on her beloved Marjorie spending a few weeks with her before she went to her own home.

"Come, I want you to see that picture before Jerome returns; tread lightly," said Mary, laughing, as she opened a door in the hall, "for you are walking on holy ground. This is my brother's private studio, and never a person enters here. There is the picture—'How they met,' Jerome painted after he returned from one of his excursions three years ago; and do you know, Marjorie, I really believe he must have fallen in love with that little spit-fire of a girl in that picture, for he has never been the same Jerome since. Oh, if I haven't forgot to give that letter to John to post. Wait for me here, I will be back in a minute."

And Mary ran off, leaving Marjorie spell-bound before the picture—'How they met."

Marjorie drew nearer, opening her hazel eyes wider, as she gazed at the picture before her.

How natural it all was.

The handsome, grave young man, leaning against the fence, idly stroking puss, and the girl in the background.

Marjorie burst into a peal of laughter.

"Well, if that ain't Aunt Hetty's cat to life," she said aloud; "but I wonder if I ever looked like that horrid little fright."

The heavy curtains of the studio window parted, and a man stepped out, his face beaming with delight.

"You promised not to forget me."

Marjorie started, and looking around, beheld the same grave, earnest face that smiled down at her over the fence, three years ago.

"And I have kept my promise," said Marjorie, frankly extending her hand.

"Pray what does all this mean?" cried Mary Wallace, as she entered the studio shortly after, and found Jerome and Marjorie hand-in-hand before "How they met."

"This is how we met," answered Jerome, pointing to the picture, and drawing Marjorie closer to him.

MODERN TRIAL BY ORDEAL.—A gentleman who some years ago acted as surgeon to several societies relates the following anecdote, which occurred between him and one of his rustic constituents.

A member of an Oddfellows' lodge came one evening for advice at the usual hour of consultation.

The symptoms were duly detailed, and the surgeon prescribed a mixture which contained two grains of tartrate of antimony in eight ounces of water.

The patient on arriving home took a dose of his medicine, but was annoyed to find that it had no little taste, and that moreover it presented no solid material to be shaken up.

On submitting the bottle to his wife, she tasted it, and pronounced it to be 'mowt but water.'

He then took counsel with some of his brethren, who were not very favorably disposed towards the doctor, and, yielding to their advice, entered a complaint to the lodge.

In due time, the doctor received from the secretary a notice to attend and answer brother Jones' charge to the effect that he had been supplied with water instead of medicine.

In reply to this notice, the surgeon asked the secretary to intimate to the aggrieved brother that it would be necessary to have the medicine produced, in order that he might have a fair chance of rebutting the charge.

When the night arrived, there was a goodly attendance of members, and the lodge having been formally opened, Jones was asked to stand forth and prefer his charge against the doctor, which he did, alleging that the bottle produced was given to him for medicine, and contained nothing but water.

After he had finished his statement, the surgeon proclaimed to the meeting that if Jones was sincere in his belief that there was nothing but water in the bottle, he could have no objection to drinking the contents at one draught.

The chairman and brethren thought this a reasonable proposition, and put it to Jones accordingly.

Jones was evidently not quite prepared for this crucial test of his belief, but could see no way out of it.

After a little hesitation he consented. The contents of the eight-ounce mixture were transferred to a tumbler, and he quaffed them off.

The doctor then intimated to the chairman that he might proceed with any other business, until the medicine had time to take effect.

After the lapse of about half an hour, Jones began to exhibit signs of internal disturbance, and a basin was brought in for his convenience.

It soon became manifest to the brethren that there must have been something more than water in the mixture.

The doctor submitted that he had effectually upset both Jones and his allegation, and quitted the lodge in triumph.

THE Great Eastern steamship was 678 feet long. A person who walked her length, back and forth, four times, would travel over a mile.

Physicians, clergymen, and scientists, unite in recommending the use of Hall's Vegetable Sicilian Hair Renewer.

SANDIE.

BY JOHN B. HARDTT.

Old friend, you are at rest
Under the sod;
Perchance 'tis for the best
Earth-clods should be press'd
Upon your manly breast,—
Your soul with God.

Down bent with years—four score,
And racked with pain,
You stood upon life's shore,
Hearing the wild waves roar
Their chorus—"evermore!"
Again, again.

You took things as they came
Pleasure, or care;
To you 'twas all the same,
A transitory flame—
A stained or spotless name
Melted in air!

Youth is the time to laugh,
Old age, to die;
A bitter cup to quaff,
While leaning on a staff,
We read the epitaph,—
"Here dry bones lie."

Your race is over now,
'Twas long and brave:
Death touched your snowy brow,
Your head began to bow,
And you are quiet—how?
In the dark grave.

HOW TIN IS MADE.

WE enter the English shops, and, the proprietor being absent, are placed under the care of the "burly master of the rolls."

He shows us first the reverberatory furnaces, as near as the scorching heat will permit us to approach, where the already almost pure iron is puddled—that is, melted and stirred under a current of intensely heated air, which burns its carbon away—until its fusing point rises even above the fierce heat of the white hot charcoal, through which the blast is roaring like a tornado, and the bubbling liquid becomes a pasty mass of metal.

It is then lifted out on a long iron bar, and swung to an anvil, where it is beaten by a huge trip hammer moved by water power, and kneaded and banged until all impurities are crushed out of it, and, in the form of a thick, rough bar it is ready for the rollers.

These rollers, which are driven by a mighty engine, are cylinders of ponderous make, weighing twenty five tons, whirling round swiftly but silently, and with such evidence of pitiless force that one almost shudders beside them.

On its way, the rough iron is reheated to incandescence, then thrust against the rollers. It is through in a moment! and in the form of a long, flat bar, which is then divided into lengths by a pair of great shears, which cut through an inch of cold iron very easily.

Then it is carried to a second set of furnaces, also heated with charcoal, when it is again raised to a high temperature, and passed between a series of rollers, more finely, until it becomes a thin, ragged edged sheet.

The cylinders are here in sets of three, placed one above the other, so that the sheets are rolled away below and returned above.

As each falls clashing to the ground, it is quickly doubled up lengthwise by the workmen, with long pincers, viciously pinched at the folds, and returned to the furnace, then rolled again, until it emerges at last in a perfectly homogeneous sheet, two feet wide, and not much thicker than the paper this is printed on.

The great sheets are now cut into squares and trimmed, and then sent to the pickling-tub, to be cleansed from the black oxide which covers them. This tub is a large cistern lined with lead, and filled with dilute sulphuric acid, over which an immense copper cage is suspended.

After the cage is packed with the plates, it is dipped down into the acid liquid, makes a few revolutions, then rises, and, with a half-turn of the beam which carries it, is brought over another vat through which a stream of water is passing.

The dip and spin are here repeated until all the acid is washed away, and the plates are taken out perfectly clean, but with rough, abraded surfaces.

To get rid of this defect, they are passed, for the last time, and without reheating, between a pair of highly-polished rollers, and emerge perfectly smooth, and resembling in color Damascus steel.

They are now ready for tinning; and on our way to the next department, we pass a stack of dusty bars of that metal. The tin is first melted and "polled"—that is, stirred up with a stick of green wood, which sends a current of steam through it, and sweeps some impurities to the surface; it is then transferred to square iron cisterns, where it is kept melted, with a layer of palm-oil on the surface to prevent oxidation.

Beneath the black, seething pool, the iron plates are plunged; and when they are taken out, they seem to have been transmuted, as in the dream of the Chinese chemist, from iron to silver, so brilliant is the coating.

They are now rubbed with sawdust, to get rid of the oil, then taken away to be packed. But they are first subjected to a curious test.

It is important that plates of the same thickness, and equally coated throughout, should be sorted together. But it would be difficult to gauge them; so a man with a good ear is seated in a comparatively quiet part of the works, and, taking each sheet by the corner, gives it a dexterous shake, eliciting a thrubbling sound—if we may coin a word—which differs, of course, in pitch with the slight change in thickness; and thus he sorts them.

At the end of the works is a saw-mill, where the oak boxes are made, in which the tin is packed; and whence it travels all over the world as "Best charcoal tin."

It is acceptable among almost all nations—from Russia, where it is used for roofing houses and covering the bizarre domes of the emerald green topped churches, to the upper waters of the Amazon, where it glitters more brightly still as the nose-plate of the festive savage, dancing, impecunious but happy, amidst the living emeralds of his forest home.

Grains of Gold.

Say—well is good; do—well is better.

A cupful of wind is better than no wind at all.

He who sews brambles must look well to his shoes.

Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self.

To argue with an angry man is like preaching to the sea.

Experience is a torch lighted in the ashes of hopes and delusions.

Great hearts alone understand how much glory there is in being good.

According to Solomon, life and death are in the power of the tongue.

A round of pleasure sometimes renders it difficult to make things square.

As to the trouble, who expects to find cherries without stones, or roses without thorns?

An humble knowledge of thyself is a surer way to God than a deep searching after learning.

If a man knew as much about himself as he does about his neighbor, he would never speak to himself.

To the Poet, the Philosopher, and the Saint, all events are profitable, all days are holy, all men divine.

Perhaps there has been nobler specimens of magnanimity in humble life than even the page of history can boast.

A right mind and generous affection have more beauty and charms than all other symmetries in the world besides.

The more self is indulged the more it demands, and, therefore, of all men, the selfish are the most discontented.

When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmuring of the brook and the rustling of the corn.

All the while thou livest ill thou hast the trouble, distraction, inconveniences of life, but not the sweet and true use of it.

One of the greatest artifices the devil uses to engage men in vice and debauchery, is to fasten names of contempt on certain virtues.

Ignoring or quickly forgetting personal injuries is characteristic of true greatness, when meaner natures would be kept in unrest by them.

It is not till the flower has fallen off that the fruit begins to ripen. So is life it is when the romance is past that the practical usefulness begins.

Books that speak through the eye, may be the worst of tempters. If books be bad—and sometimes they are especially bad—no tempters can be worse.

Greed for human glory destroys all greatness of soul. Who so seeks the favor of men is forced, in all his acts and words, to submit to their wishes.

Kind looks, kind words, kind acts, and warm hand-shakers—these are the secondary means of grace when men are in trouble, and are fighting their unseen battles.

The highest attainable knowledge is that which is rightly chosen, rightly compounded, acquired by right methods, employed to right purposes, and pervaded with the influence of the Spirit of God.

Femininities.

The city undertaker of Palatka, Fla., is a woman.

In love, as in war, a fortress that parleys is half taken.

The man who can govern a woman, can govern a nation.

God created the coquette as soon as He had made the fool.

Women take kindly to the telephone; it never disputes their right to the last word.

An Ohio girl with 48 toes was born recently. She ought to make a grand all-toe singer.

A 15-year-old Denver girl who eloped to meet her lover, took an eight-months-old brother with her.

A lady in Williamantic, Ct., dodged the measles for eighty-four years, but she was caught at last.

No man who loves not the truth can love a woman in the grand way a woman ought to be loved.

How many women would laugh at the funerals of their husbands if it were not the custom to weep!

Josh Billings says Artemus Ward left his mother $600,000 in his will, when he hadn't 60 cents to his name.

An Irishman says he can see no earthly reason why women should be allowed to become medical men.

Mrs. Strong was the first cotton-raiser in California, and last year she produced one hundred and ninety bales.

A Vermont man has been married six times, and he's the citizen they always get to go out first in a bear-hunt.

The prejudices of men emanate from the mind, and may be overcome; the prejudices of women emanate from the heart, and are impregnable.

"Men live a great deal faster than women," says a writer. This must be true, because you never see a woman quite as old as a man born in the same year.

Mrs Blake says "woman wants more privileges." We don't see just how they be given her, unless she is allowed one whole side of the street-car and all the sidewalk.

From the way some young women spread perfumery over themselves when their beaux are around, one would imagine that they thought "love went where it was scent."

"Oh, professor!" exclaimed the sentimental old Mrs Fishwacker, during a private organ recital in her new music room, "do pull out that sweet nux vomica stop once more!"

"Isn't it awful!" cried Julia, as a dog in the agony of fright went scurrying by, with a kettle tied to his tail. "Yes, indeed," said Jones; "there won't be much left of the kettle."

A Quaker's advice to his son on his wedding-day: "When thee went a-courting, I told thee to keep thy eyes wide open. Now that thee is married, I tell thee to keep them half shut."

"Folding baby carriages" are advertised by a certain firm. A folded baby—one that will stay folded—is something an army of long-suffering fathers and mothers would rejoice to see.

A palmistry craze has again broken out in society, and fortune-telling parties are the rage. Ladies who are well read in head-lines, heart-lines and life-lines, find themselves correspondingly popular.

A man, in order to avoid the annoyances of leap year, wore a card on the breast of his coat, with this inscription: "I am engaged." Despite this a woman tackled him and married him inside of two weeks.

"What influence has the moon upon the tides?" asked the professor. The class wag replied that he didn't know exactly what influence it had upon the tied, but that it had a tendency to make the untied awful spoony.

"No," said the young man, "I don't like flashy neckties, but I've worn them since the beginning of the silk quilt craze. You see, the girls beg the ties, and that makes the fellow who wears them of some importance."

A man will burn his fingers lighting a cigar with a piece of paper, and make no fuss about it, but when his wife asks him to set the tea-kettle over, and he takes hold of the warm handle, he is mad enough to shipwreck the kitchen.

"Why didn't I go to her assistance?" said the man who stayed in bed while his wife laid out a burglar. "Young man, I've had a number of tussles with the old gal, and I knew that burglar had trouble enough without my giving him any."

A loving father at Clayton, N. Y., in his anxiety to marry off all his daughters (fifteen in number) as quick as possible, has killed his dog, taken the locks off his doors, and hung rope-ladders over his dooryard by the dozen; and still his provision bill is as large as ever.

The noble passion, true love, contains all the elements of self-sacrifice. Love that pines, and whines, and envies, and feel spiteful at every attention not lavished on itself and its own gratification, is not love at all, although it goes so often by the name, and is mistaken for it.

A young mother, traveling with her infant child, writes the following letter to her husband at home: "We are all doing first-rate and enjoying ourselves very much. We are in fine health. The boy can crawl about on all fours. Hoping that the same may be said of you, I remain, etc., Fanny."

A Michigan woman carries the monochromatic style of dress even to her hair. When she buys a new dress, she orders a new wig to match it. Her husband insists that she shall not make a guy of herself, but is willing to allow her full scope so long as she confines herself to modest and natural colors. As might have been expected, she considers herself abused, and has begun proceedings for divorce. This is another instance of man's inhumanity to woman.

News Notes.

Cheyenne, W. T., has the electric light.

The Jews were the first to divide time by weeks.

Seventy two papers are published in Mexico.

Wyoming Territory has but eight organized counties.

Five hundred artists now have studios in New York City.

Four fifths of the London merchants live twenty miles away.

"Standard" time has again been voted down in Bangor, Me.

Meerschaum has been discovered in some parts of North Carolina.

A parrot in a New York restaurant cries: "Don't tip the waiters."

Lamb & Bull is the curious name of a Hartford firm of butchers.

Samuel Mackay, of New South Wales, has a farm of 5,000,000 acres.

The popular vote for Garfield was 4,440,-058, and for Hancock 4,442,035.

Tennessee now has 33 cotton mills, with 1,161 looms, and 78,877 spindles.

The school book trade of the country amounts to $5,000,000 annually.

Thirty eight women are in the medical classes at the University of Zurich.

The wooden boxes that bring oranges from Florida are manufactured in Maine.

Some of the mummies in the British Museum have false teeth on gold plates.

London has 28 daily journals, 524 weeklies, and over 400 monthly magazines.

The Chinese invented the tread mill, and used it to raise water for irrigating fields.

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows is the largest benevolent society in the world.

Among the journals recently started in Germany is a comic paper called Mixed Pickles.

There are 6,490 colored persons in Chicago, and the police arrested 2,015 colored persons last year.

Ireland had 32.32 per cent. of the population of Great Britain in 1852. She now has 14.81 per cent.

It is said that a chemist of Pittsburg has re-discovered the art of making obsidian, or black glass.

A father in law in New York, after thrashing his son-in-law, has been congratulated by a magistrate.

Texas makes highway robbery punishable by an imprisonment of not less than ten years, or for life.

The recent Southern tornado blew cars off the track, and moved huge mill-stones that lay upon the ground.

Captain Traynor, who once crossed the Atlantic in a dory, now proposes to make the trip in a row-boat.

The cities of Nebraska, it is stated, charge a liquor license of one thousand dollars, the villages half as much.

M. De Lesseps is said to sometimes sleep 24 hours in succession, and then go nearly a week without sleep.

Nearly one fifth of all the children in Providence, R. I., of school age, did not attend school a single day in 1883.

Headache almost always yields to the simultaneous application of hot water to the feet and the back of the neck.

The Northern Accident Insurance Company, of Scotland, declines to take further risks in football and bicycling.

It is stated that during the present century 130,000,000 copies of the Bible have been printed in 226 different languages.

Chicago firemen spent 15 minutes cutting telegraph wires the other night before they could get water on a burning building.

An Indian student at a school in Huntsville, Texas, was recently expelled for packing his clothes in a trunk on Sunday.

The consumption of wine for the last two years in England is said to be upward of 5,000,000 gallons less than it was ten years ago.

From 1334 to 1834 sumptuary edicts as to dress were issued at Berlin. The last forbade women without rank to wear silk dresses.

During the last ten years the French speaking population of Canada has increased at a much greater ratio than the English.

Longfellow is the first American to find a memorial in Westminster Abbey, and the bust placed in the Poets' Corner is worthy of the occasion.

In Austria Hungary every newspaper appearing more than twice a month has to deposit caution-money if politics are treated or mentioned.

A wide mouthed bottle filled with chloride of lime and placed on a shelf or mantel, will purify the air of a room and prevent contagious diseases, such as malaria.

A cane made from a rail said to have been split by Abraham Lincoln in 1860, was among the relics displayed at the recent celebration of a golden wedding in Chicago.

The methods of a California divorce lawyer was to erase the names from old decrees and write in those of new clients. These fraudulent papers were then filed in court.

One of the wealthiest firms in the State of Maine is composed of two brothers of Augusta, whose original capital was only five thousand dollars, which their sister recovered in a breach of promise suit.

Out of the Way.

BY MINNIE DOUGLAS.

"YOU sha'n't have my daughter!" said old Felix Foster, bringing his fist down on the table with a crash. "There's no use talking young man. I am determined you sha'n't have her!"

"At least you will tell me why," insisted Jack Bloom, the young lawyer's clerk, who had just made application for the hand of the old gentleman's only daughter. "What do you know against me sir?"

"For the matter of that, nothing in particular," replied old Felix Foster. "But I'm a solid man myself. I have made money, and I want to lay that money in a warm nest.

"Now, if I give my girl to a poor fellow like you, when she comes in for what I leave her, you'll spend it, instead of doubling it.

"Besides, you're too young—not six-and-twenty.

"And there's my old friend, Frisbee, five-and-fifty, owns his block of houses and a hundred-acre farm, factory and forty workmen's cottages. You ought to have sense enough to see that he is the man for Agatha not you."

"But if Agatha likes me best?" pleaded young Bloom.

"Stuff and nonsense! She'll like who I tell her to," replied Mr. Foster, whose grammar was not his strong point. "And as I've an appointment at two, I'll say good-bye to you, young man."

At this hint Mr. Bloom bowed himself out of the great contractor's office.

He intended to have Agatha Foster. He did not care for her fortune, and he knew she hated the elderly suitor whom her father favored.

"Elope with me, Agatha," he pleaded—not on his knees, because that style of wooing is quite out of fashion, but under the side-window of her father's house, before that gentleman came in to tea. "Elope with me. We are both of age. Let us defy everybody!"

"I suppose 'pa would forgive me in time" said Agatha; "but I can't go without my things.

"I have a very nice wardrobe, and lots of jewelry and things; and I want to be married decently, and have someone to take away my clothes; but how can I do it, when all day long, from the time 'pa goes out, old James Davids, his watchman, walks outside, pledged to lock me up in my own room if I set foot beyond the door, and to let no one in?"

"Is he?" said the lawyer's clerk, sarcastically, as at a signal from his lady-love he kissed his hand and ran away.

"Mind you, Davids," said Felix Foster, as he buttoned his overcoat in the hall—"mind you, don't desert your post. No going out, and no coming in. That girl of mine has no mother, and I've got to be both parents to her.

"Don't let so much as a letter be carried in at the door."

"No, your honor; not whilst I'm alive," said Davids.

But, alas! who can calculate upon circumstances?

Solemn James Davids, sitting all evening in the the hall-chair, the object of the detestation of all the female servants, opened the door on a crack to all applicants, slipping letters into his own pockets, and keeping the house free from intruders, thought himself invulnerable.

His weak spot had been discovered by his enemy.

It was a bad boy.

At five o'clock a sharp ring came at the door, which answering, he found no one there.

Another and another followed.

"It's a boy as runs and hides himself," said Davids, peering up and down the street.

"The next ring I'll catch him, and he waited with his back against the door. The ring came: out bolted Davids, down the street, peered into areas; peeped around the corner; found no boy, and was about to return to the house, when a hand caught his coat collar.

"Help!" roared a voice. "Help! Thieves! Police!"

"Let me be," shouted Davids. "What do you catch hold of me for?"

"You've got my pocket-book," cried the young man.

"If you haven't, you've thrown it away. I missed it as you ran past me. Officer,"—this to a policeman who had speedily arrived—"I want this man arrested. I've lost my pocket-book."

And so, amid his protestations, that respectable old person, James Davids, was pushed, pulled and dragged to the nearest police-station, followed by a crowd of ragamuffins, and there locked up for the whole night.

And that young man who had lost his pocket-book, and who was to appear against him the next morning, looked suspiciously like the young lawyer's clerk, Jack Bloom, who, of course, knew that one against whom a charge was made must be arrested, even if he was able to prove himself entirely innocent next day.

And who came to the door in a carriage half an hour after but this same young Bloom; and who got into it but Agatha Foster; and where did they drive but to the registrar's, where they were married.

And Betsy Jane, and Sarah, and Ellen Maria all helped to carry down the trunks, bags, and parcels with which the cart that came very soon after the carriage was heavily loaded, so that when at seven o'clock old Mr. Foster rung at his own bell, Betsy Jane opened the door, meekfaced and tidy, while all the other servants listened at the foot of the kitchen stairs.

"Where's Davids?" asked Mr. Foster.

"Please, sir, a p'liceman arrested him a while ago for picking a gentleman's pocket" said Betsy.

"Davids pick a pocket! Nonsense! He never did it!" roared Mr. Foster.

"No, sir. I suppose not, please, sir," said Betsy.

"And where's Miss Agatha?" asked Mr. Foster.

"Gone for a ride, sir,"

"What?"

"Gone a riding, sir."

"Where? Who with?"

"Please, sir, I don't know where. With a real nice young gentleman, with black moustaches, sir," replied Betsy, demurely.

For an hour or two the neighbors all wondered what had happened at Foster's and cook said she wondered the roof did not fall in, for she never heard such language.

And the return of Davids, with his account of false arrest and imprisonment, did not mend matters.

But Agatha was right, after all.

In a few months the old gentleman felt that he could not do without his girl, and finally wrote her a letter which re-established the happiness of the family.

To-day the young lawyer's stratagem and his method of getting old Davids out of the way is considered an excellent joke by his worthy father-in-law.

HASSAN THE WISE.—Hassan Ben Omar threw himself prostrate upon the ground outside of the walls of Bassora, and tore his hair with rage. In three years of riot and luxury he had dissipated the wealth which he had inherited from Good Omar, his father. His house, his vineyard, his olive-yards were all gone; and now he would be compelled to seek employment as a camel-driver, or beg of those who had feasted sumptuously on his extravagance. He cursed his unhappy fate, reproached Allah, charged his friends with ingratitude, and called loudly upon death to release him from his misery. His old servants approached, and tried to comfort him; but he drove them away with abuse and blows, and dashed himself again upon the earth. For a long time he lay moaning and weeping. At length a voice sounded in his ears.

"Listen, Hassan Ben Omar! Allah intends thee good."

Hassan raised his head, and his eyes rested upon a venerable dervish, who was calmly contemplating his grief.

"Begone, old man," he cried, "if thou can'st not work a miracle for my relief!"

"Listen!" replied the dervish. "The Prophet has sent me to serve thee. What would'st thou have?"

"Give me my possessions again—my vineyards, my fields, and my gold!"

"And what would it avail thee," said the old man, "if I were to do this? When they were thine, thou had'st not the wisdom to keep them; in three years thou would'st be as wretched as now. But attend, Hassan Ben Omar! Reform thy life, govern thy passions, moderate thy desires, hate the wine-cup, labor for thy bread, eat only when thou art hungry, and sleep when thou art weary! Do these things for one year, and thou shalt be monarch of my kingdom."

A mist darkened the eyes of Hassan. When it was gone, behold the dervish was nowhere to be seen.

Hassan invoked the aid of Allah, and rose from the ground with a light heart. He joined a caravan, which set out for the desert the next day. No began to rise early, and to labor with diligence. A cup of water and a few dates formed his simple meal; and at night he lay down by the side of his camels, and enjoyed sweeter repose than he had ever known before. Thus, for a year, he lived a frugal and patient life. At the end of the time, he was again at the same place before the walls of Bassora. He prostrated himself upon the earth, and cried out, "Now, Allah, fulfil thy promise."

Suddenly he heard the same voice as before.

"Hassan Ben Omar, thou hast done well, and thy reward is with thee. Behold, thy kingdom is *thyself*! I have taught thee to rule it. Be wise and happy!"

Hassan looked in vain for the speaker; no one was near. He pondered deeply upon these things, and finally resolved to continue as he had begun.

Thus he lived for many years, gradually becoming more prosperous, but firmly retaining his frugal and industrious habits, until he became richer than the Good Omar, his father, and was called Hassan the Wise.

M. S.

THE KING OF TRAMPS.—Distressed monarchs always command my sympathy, says the editor of the London *Truth*. Last week George Scott, "the king of tramps," was charged with begging at Pickering. He had on four coats and two vests. Attached to one coat were two rings and a thimble, denoting his royal dignity, and on another were seventy-eight buttons, indicating his age. In his possession was a very large and varied assortment of buttons, including some belonging to various police forces and those of most foreign countries, and also a wooden spoon, which appeared to be a souvenir of Durham jail. I am glad to see that this interesting individual was discharged with a caution, for I cannot help thinking that he sets a very good example to other crowned heads, by the simple and inexpensive nature of his regalia and robes of office.

"JUMBO" is the suggestive name of a town recently incorporated in Texas.

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☞ When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.

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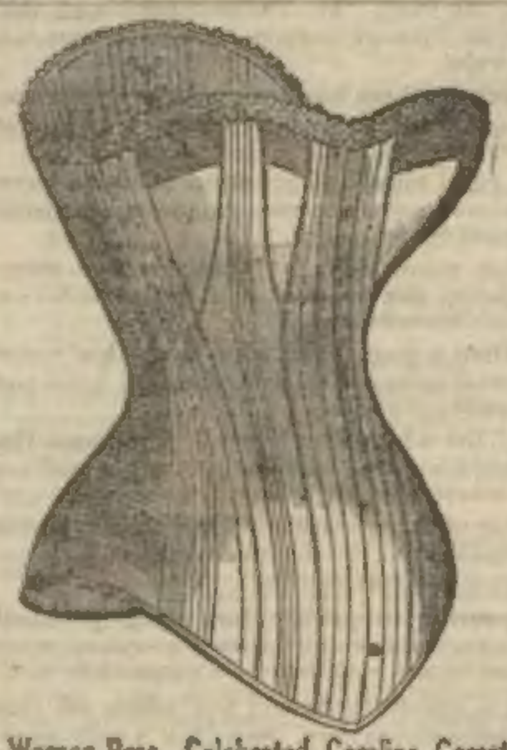

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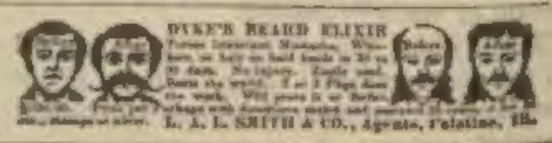

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"The Register," is what the well-known writer, W. D. Howells, calls a "farce." It is a neat little character story, short enough to be read at a sitting, introducing but few characters, and overflowing with point in the way of sentiment and wit. To give an idea of it further than this would be to mainly tell the story, a pleasure we would not anticipate for those who like a pleasant hour's reading. It is beautifully printed in a neat little volume of ninety pages. Osgood & Co. Boston, Publisher. For sale by Lippincott. Price 50 cents.

"The Retrospect" by John Ap Thomas Jones is a poem divided into three cantos. It is a picture of this country, portraying the march of improvement, the sweeping away of the landmarks of the savage the early pioneer and the coming of the modern emigrant. A story runs through the poem which is in itself interesting. The style of metre is that flowing easy measure adopted by Scott in his longer poems, and though it may seem like literary treason to say it, we think "The Retrospect" as entertaining and perhaps more so than this master's "Lady of the Lake." Of course poetry is not so much read as it might be but those read "The Retrospect" will no doubt find it enjoyable. Printed on stiff paper and elegantly bound. Price $1,00. For sale by Lippincott & Co.

The Colossus of Rhodes must take a back seat. Bartholdi's Statue of "Liberty Enlightning the World" is a revelation. New York is to be envied. And in some smaller degree we may be envied. We have just been presented with a superb picture, 26x36, by the Travelers Ins. Co., of Hartford Conn. giving a capital representation of the majestic image.

MAGAZINES.

Our Little Ones and The Nursery is just the kind of a magazine for the youngest sort of readers. It is filled with good stories and nice pictures exactly calculated to please and improve their unfolding hearts and minds. The Russell Publishing Co. Boston, Mass., $1,50 per year.

In the April *Magazine of American History*. The article on Major-General Richard Montgomery of the Continental Army is richly illustrated with some eighteen or more historic portraits and antique views. In the second paper of this number of the Magazine we have a description of the Natchez Indians—A Lost Tribe, which is supplemented in the Minor Topics by a spirited account of the: Massacre of St. Andre. Professor Salisbury concludes his scholarly essays on: The Griswold Family of Connecticut. General John C. Robinson contributes a very readable article, entitled The Utah Expedition. Chapter VII. of the Private Intelligence Papers of Sir Henry Clinton, edited by Edward F. De Lancey, is one of the most interesting chapters that have yet appeared from this mine of valuable Original Documents. Minor Topics, Notes, Queries, Replies, Societies, and Book Notices are, as usual, crowded with matters of importance and entertainment. Published at 30 Lafayette Place, New York City.

Arthur's Home Magazine for April contains the following: Some South American Falls, Illustrated; Little Nell; Palm Trees, Illustrated; Modern Fiction; My Old Maid; The Peacock, Illustrated; Lisette's Devotion, Illustrated; How Rena Paid Her Debt; Advice to the Unmarried; Sunshine and Shadow; His House and Mine; How Women Can Earn Money, etc. The departments are likewise filled with good matter. Arthur & Son Publishers, Phila.

Lippincott's Magazine for April opens with a delightfully written and finely illustrated article on New Germantown and Chestnut Hill. In the Kauri Forests of New Zealand, by Miss F. G. Gordon Cumming, the well-known traveler, is a simple but graphically worded narrative. How the Roman Spent His Year, is the title of the first of two papers by Professor William F. Allen. Glimpses of the Queen's Negroes, by Arthur F. J. Crandall, has the merit of being not only amusing but fresh and instructive. A German Novel, by Horace M. Kennedy, and, Some New Anecdotes of Heine, by William R. Thayer, are the literary articles of the number. In the way of fiction, the continuation of The Perfect Treasure, by F. C. Baylor, is exceedingly clever and entertaining, and the beginning of another short serial, At Last, by Annie Porter, promises the interest of a strong plot and romantic incidents. Her Lover, by Louise Stockton, is a very pleasing and well-contrived story, and, April Fish, by M. J. Barnett is a Florentine sketch appropriate to the number. Easter Customs and Traditions, and other short papers in the Monthly Gossip should not be overlooked.

The Popular Science Monthly for April has the following contents: The coming Slavery, by Herbert Spencer; The Electric Railway, illustrated; Photographing a Streak of Lightning, illustrated; Method of Instruction in Mineralogy; Physiological Significance of Vital Force; The Chemistry of Cookery; A Defense of Modern Thought; The Faculty of Speech; Biblical and Modern Leprosy; The Remedies of Nature,—Miscellaneous, by Felix L. Oswald, M.D; The Morality of Happiness; Why the Eyes of Animals shine in the Dark, illustrated; Prehistoric art in America, by the Marquis de Nadaillac; Recent Geological Changes in Western Michigan; Sketch of August Wilhelm Hofmann, with Portrait; Correspondence; Old Stump-Wells in the Mississippi "Bottom."—Work of Shod and Unshod Horses; Editor's Table: The Edinburgh Review on the Spencerian Philosophy; Literary Notices; Popular Miscellany, and Notes. Appleton & Co. New York.

Facetiæ.

The most common skylight—A star.

Quick at figures—The dancing-master.

What shoemaker is that who makes shoes without leather? The farrier.

Don't let your physician flatter you on Heart Disease. Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator always cures.

The place where they "break the noose gently" is in the divorce court.

A Safeguard.

The fatal rapidity with which slight **Colds** and **Coughs** frequently develop into the gravest maladies of the throat and lungs, is a consideration which should impel every prudent person to keep at hand, as a household remedy, a bottle of AYER'S CHERRY PECTORAL.

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Little Golden Sunbeam.
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Twickenham Ferry.
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Killarney.
All on account of Eliza.
The Torpedo and the Whale!
The Man with the Sealskin Pants.
The Old Folks are gone.
Is Jennie True To Me?
Oh, Lucinda.
Put Away That Straw.
With the Angels By and Bye.
Scenes of Childhood.
Grandmother's Chair.
Oh, Mary Ann, I'll Tell Your Ma!
My Heart's with my Norah.
Lardy Dah!
The Colored Hop.
Don't Shut out the Sunlight Mother.
The Sweet Flowers I've Brought to You.
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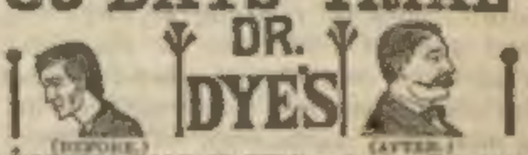

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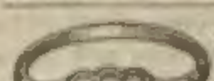

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

SURELY designers and colorists are having a good time of it, for legions must be employed in the conception and reproduction of goods which vary so infinitely both in form and decoration.

A touch of fancy and a bright note of color gladden everything around us, from the penny toy to the costliest parure of diamonds.

In short, Fashion can be summed up in these words:—everything glitters, sparkles, dazzles, flickers, and gleams with metallic sheen, or glows with prismatic splendor.

The variety is immense; scarcely has a manufacturer distributed his goods throughout the world than he cancels all his patterns and sets quickly to work to invent fresh ones.

The puzzle is, what becomes of the old stock? For instance, it is quite out of the question to pass off a stuff from one season to the other, and even in what might be called the classical colors—such as plain blue, violet, not to say black itself—a perfect match can seldom be obtained.

Try to match a piece of blue, and at once the salesman will detect to what season it belonged by its special tinge alone.

Should it date from one or two seasons back there is very little hope of getting a remnant of it.

To convince you of this impossibility, the vendor may, if he has time, exhibit to your astonished eyes the different cards of patterns, which clearly prove the incredible phases of the same shade.

Amongst this medley how is one to give a faithful idea of reigning styles? The painter himself would fail in the task!

What brush could depict the subtlety of colors which arises not only from the running mixture of ingredients, but also from the make of the material itself, whether the surface be rough, smooth, twilled, ribbed, checked, striped, embossed, printed, and, again, from the way the stuff is draped or gathered.

Many "camaieu" brocades with light ottoman grounds are in use for Parisian dinner toilette.

Glazed taffetas is trimmed with all kinds of rich embroidery. The simplest have small lozenges or flowers in one of the glazed goods.

Very peculiar combinations of color are to be seen in these fabrics, as for instance, slate-colored and copper-colored glazed goods with flowers of copper-colored velvet sapphire and nut brown, and sapphire-colored embroidery.

Another odd combination is moss and old gold surah covered with close designs of coffee grains formed of long floss silk in coffee and old gold colors.

A very elegant model is of glazed goods in sapphire and moss colors in most beautiful changeable hues, with large embroidered bars of different lengths arranged in groups of five and forming a kind of lozenge-shaped design.

Another novelty is a Pekin fabric with broad stripes about two and a half inches wide.

One of the stripes is of fire-colored glazed taffetas and the other of dark blue satin, brocaded with shaded velvet flowers. A redingote of the rich texture is worn over a fire-colored taffetas skirt.

Ribbons are in the same style as this fancy goods, with all kinds of designs, such as corners of farm-yards with chickens and grass, flowers and fruit, butterflies and birds, all perfectly imitated.

This is a Spring novelty most suitable for trimming straw bonnets. The ribbon will be arranged in large cockades.

As it is too early in the season for ladies to make any change in their toilets, and as many literary and musical matinees are now occurring in order to make some modifications, the toilet demi-saison hats are restored to and worn with Winter suits.

The lace capotes alluded to in a former article are most favored for these occasions.

They are white and brownish, and worked with steel or silver beads or with gilt braid.

Some bonnets are of red lace, trimmed with feathers of the same color.

The capotes are often combined with velvet and trimmed either with a lace puffing a velvet bow in a dark or light shade contrasting with the covering of the capote and arranged in the shape of a large flower, or with flowers, or plumes.

Scotch plaid velvets, with light grounds, will also serve for string and bows on dark-colored bonnets.

Gray, which has been very fashionable for Parisian bonnets, will be replaced by a very light shade of beige.

This delicate hue harmonizes with flowers of every color, and light flowers and feathers are combined for demi-saison bonnets.

Small peacock's feathers on long stems are very effective mixed with bunches of pink, white or mauve flowers. Straw hats are still trimmed with velvet.

The chief novelty in this line is variety in the straw-work, which is sometimes as smooth as satin. The bonnets are also embroidered with silk and beads.

"Capeline" shaped Manila straws are to be worn, with the brims either raised on the sides or fluted around by means of ribbon.

The most appropriate embroidery for Manila straw is of light beige silk, in which case the trimmings are of satin, of the same color, with a large bunch of flowers. Metal fastenings are still used to fasten feathers against hats, and also to adorn the strings.

These ornaments should, however, not be too freely resorted to, as they would then make the hat common.

Cloth costumes admit of little trimming, but are frequently bordered with narrow pleatings of velvet, similar velvet forming the ornaments on the corsage and the paraments.

The plain cloth skirt is often made with tucks, but the whole grace and style of the costume depend upon the arrangement of the draperies; if the draping is well managed the costume is stylish and ladylike, no matter how plain it may be; but beauty of material and good trimmings are thrown away if the draping is common-place or badly executed.

In new visiting toilettes we note one in moss-green cashmere, caroubier surah, and moss-green broche velvet on a caroubier satin brown.

The skirt is of broche, cut at the edge in sharp points over narrow pleating of green velvet and red satin.

The draped tunic is of cashmere, and the jacket of broche with rounded basques opening over a pleated plastron of red surah, gauged at the neck and waist, and ending in two flounces of black lace.

The jacket fronts are joined by silk cord and passementerie ornaments over the gaugings, and a red surah tichu edged with black lace is draped round the neck. At the back the basque forms two fluted pleats cut in coquilles and lined with surah.

Spring chapeaux are to be ornamented with all kinds of impossible and unheard-of flowers, but as these are not yet ready modistes are now turning all their attention to the fabrication of rosettes and cockades of ribbon velvet.

Feathers, fancy plumes, and birds are all to be discarded for these cockades, which are used for all kinds of capotes, bonnets, and hats.

The capote shaped like an infant's christening cap, to which we have previously referred continues to be in partial favor, but it is not, and is not likely to become, very generally adopted.

A coiffure that is very much preferred is a capote, of which the crown is covered with bouillonne crape, the brim consisting of velvet to match, and the only ornament a large cockade of ribbon velvet.

Capotes veiled with tulle are also worn, but unless the tulle is remarkably well arranged, the folds have a heavy appearance that is far from being becoming.

Pink is a favorite color for very dressy bonnets, such as are worn at the theatre in Paris: for visiting toilette black velvet capotes are lined with pink crape, and ornamented with a pink cockade or plume and aigrette.

Chapeaux of lace and tulle will, as usual, be largely adopted for the intermediate season, especially black lace capotes, by far the most generally useful chapeaux.

A charming model is of black net, stretched on the frame and embroidered with spots of cut jet beads as large as a pea; round the brim is a close row of similar beads, and over all is thrown a light veil of completed tulle, the folds all meeting at the curtain.

Fireside Chat.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CARDS.

THOUSANDS of Christmas New Year's Easter and other cards are now lying in boxes and drawers waiting to be utilized in some decorative way, or turned to some account for the pleasure of others. We are told that untearable-paged albums filled with them are gratefully for childrens' and other hospitals, creches where young infants are looked after, and also for export to missionary stations and far off homes in the West.

Long strips of coarse holland or glazed lining, or Turkey twill, folded in half, bound with worsted, braid, or galoon, with cards pasted on both sides, made to fold up tolerably flat, with an elastic band passed round the whole is one suggestion offered.

The length may be from a yard and a half to two and a half yards.

When the cards are being sorted, care must be taken to put them at a little distance from each other, to admit of the folding.

Perhaps it would be best to fold the foundation up first, press it heavily, and then paste in the cards.

The outside should be ornamented. Another is to connect all the string of cards by ribbon placed near the top and bottom of each card, and make a little cover for them to fold into, tying it with ribbon strings.

Albums for drawing-room use are quite general now.

They are brought out and exhibited for the benefit of friends and visitors. The taste and neatness of some, and the variety of arrangement and artistic decoration of others, are quite worthy of emulation.

The last idea is to try and get the sender of each card to sign his or her initials at the corner.

The monogram or the address of the sender's paper, and any little written good wish, is constantly placed below the card, and occasionally the foreign stamp and post-mark.

If it is feasible, a circle, diamond, or oval is cut out of one corner, and the photograph of the friend inserted from the back.

A novelty in albums is a large butterfly shape. This can be made by skilful fingers at home, or to order by a professional bookbinder.

One made by a lady, was composed of large sheets of stout cardboard cut into the form of a butterfly's wing.

The outside ones were covered with velvet, gummed on, and the edges hidden on the inner side by a piece of fancy-patterned paper.

All the sheets were bound down the back with braid, and then all sewn together; this made them easy to open.

A roll of stuffed brown velvet formed the gigantic body of the butterfly, with white beads for eyes, and silk twisted round and round bonnet-wire for the antennæ.

All the cards were gummed in according to size, some being cut at the edges to enable them to fit into the shape of the page.

The largest was always in the centre, and both sides of the sheet was covered. I was told of a lady who had made a diamond-shaped album, with plush cover, with the date of the year in large gilt letters on the outside.

She has a new volume every year, and a different colored plush.

This may appear to some to be an extravagence, but surely, now that the cards are brought to such perfection and artistic beauty, a collection of them is as worthy of a good cover as anything else.

Screens covered with cards are constantly seen now, and one or two made from common wooden kitchen clothes horses have been very successful.

On each side a piece of thin wood, or of millboard, was nailed (the latter is the best, as it takes the fancy paper best).

The edges are painted some color, dark blue or green, or bright vermillion, afterwards varnished.

In some cases they were bound with red plush.

The cards were not pasted on quite to the base, but a dado of plush velveteen, or some decorative material was fixed on, to the height of a foot or a little more.

Both the double and treble clothes horse are used.

The effect is very good. The back is often of cretonne or some material.

Another way is to paste on the cards to very large Japanese fans, stretched out to their full extent, and fix them into a wooden stand made for the purpose.

The two fans are joined together to form a circle permanently, and a screen at the same time.

The idea has been taken from the large Japanese fan screens, which are fixed by the handles into an ornamental wooden stand, and move up and down at will.

Anyone who has seen them this winter will know exactly what I mean.

Sheets of cardboard cut into the shape of large fans would answer the purpose, and the stand could be easily made by any handy man or village carpenter.

Both sides are covered with the cards. The little tables now so general in fashionable drawing-rooms, a size larger than the popular milking stools, are frequently painted some dark color, and have one or two pretty cards gummed on, to look as if they were hastily thrown down, and afterwards varnished.

Sometimes the flowers or figures have been cut out, but more frequently the whole card is put on.

The clever series of dog cards, which appeared this winter, and have been so widely circulated, are well adapted for this style of decoration.

Small pretty cards are gummed into the tambourines that are now fashionable for the moment as visiting card holders, or as ornaments for the corners of a standing screen or mantel valance, suspended by twisted ribbons of two colors.

The cards are gummed in, one slightly over the other, in a haphazard way.

Several of these card-decorated tambourines have been sold at recent bazaars, and found ready purchasers. The cards are cut to fit the circle.

Tables, covered with a variety of cards, and afterwards varnished, are not novel, but have improved with time.

Correspondence.

LIZZIE.—It is quite right though not obligatory for you to return an equivalent for the present made to you by your lover; but without knowing his general habits, we cannot advise as to the article you should present.

READER.—Three sheets in the wind" is a very old way of expressing that a person is about three parts intoxicated. We are not aware how the saying originated, but like many others, no doubt became perpetuated through its triteness.

ALICE.—The largest nugget ever found was "The Welcome Nugget," dug up at Ballarat It weighed over 184 pounds and was sold for $60,000 The first nugget was discovered in New South Wales in 1851. It weighed a hundredweight, and was bought from a shepherd for $50.

R. E. A.—If he be dishonorable and wish to draw off from his engagement, be assured you have been spared much misery in the future as his wife. Better have a clear understanding on the question of his attachment to you at once, at let him go freely. If he desires it, and there be no just cause for a change on his part with which you could be blamed.

FIX.—It is hardly correct of you to allow the visits of the two brothers under the circumstances you state. Their being on familiar terms with other young ladies seems to show that they are influenced by feelings of friendship only towards you. You had better decline their visits, which, if either have any true regard for you, will soon cause it to be declared.

LULU.—"Fair Rosamond" was a beautiful woman, daughter of Lord Walter Clifford, and the favorite of King Henry II of England. She lived chiefly at Woodstock where she was frequently visited by the King, and by whom she became the mother of two sons, one having been William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, and Geoffrey, afterward bishop of Lincoln. Her death is recorded as having occurred in 1177.

AMELIA.—It is more becoming to you to appear rather reserved in the company of young men than bold and forward. The first quality will make you respected, and, in the end, cause you to be sought after by those who desire a wife whose name is not lightly bandied about among their acquaintances. Though quite old enough to be married, you are too young to have any occasion for anticipating the old maid's doom.

B. S.—If your lover writes to you once weekly, you have no reason to complain of his neglect. Remember that a young man who is striving to put himself into a position to keep a wife, has much uphill work before him, and not many hours' leisure to spend in writing. Your own writing would be much improved if you wrote more deliberately—it has at present the appearance of having been dashed off in a hurry.

BELLE C.—We think you will act very unwisely if you decline the offer that is being so pressed by the gentleman, and advocated by the friends on both sides. It is a lady's duty to marry, if she can marry respectably, and the husband that wishes to be has the requisite qualifications, which in your case seems acknowledged. Love does not always arise before marriage, but unless dispositions are contrary, a true affection is sure to follow. Your writing would look much better if you wrote less hurriedly.

M. C.—1. Unless the gentleman gave some special reason for being made especially happy by the acquaintance of the lady—such as that he had heard a great deal of her, or knew some intimate friend of hers—the speech would be rather a silly one on his part, and would not require any answer. Simply go on with some remark on some ordinary topic. 2. A lady should wait until the gentleman offers his arm. Under the circumstances you describe, the gentleman would be very stupid and awkward, indeed, if he did not offer his arm at once.

ETIQUETTE.—When the guests are all assembled, a careful and attentive host will indicate to the gentlemen in the quietest manner possible the ladies whom he wishes to confide to their care; so that on dinner being announced, the guests may at once find themselves paired, and avoid the confusion and trouble that might arise from too many gentlemen claiming the honor of escorting some conspicuous beauty and leaving other ladies of less pretension in a solitary and embarrassing position. The host himself escorts the lady of most distinction; and the hostess is conducted by the gentleman who has the greatest claim to that honor. The guests then follow, each accompanied by the lady pointed out by the host, leaning on the left arm of her cavalier. On entering the dining-room the host will seat the lady he has escorted on his right hand; he then directs his guests to their appointed places.

W. K. B.—How many more times are we to decline giving information that could not possibly benefit our readers? What real use is there in being told that something brilliant awaits us in the future, and wasting our youth and life waiting for that which will never come; or to be told that a certain young man whom, by the description, you easily and credulously recognize as one you have taken a fancy to, is deeply in love with you, and will shortly take means to let you know—when most likely the said young man is already engaged to be married, and perhaps a few weeks after you hear that the ceremony has given him to another? Or if misfortune is predicted, will it not render your life a misery to believe that it is hanging over you? We knew one young lady who was promised by the female professor two husbands and a large family of children. Poor girl, she now lies in her quiet grave without the smallest tithe of the prediction having been verified. Pray consider before you part with your money for a shadow.

FARMER.—A cheap barometer is the following:—Take an eight-ounce phial, and put in it three gills of water, and place in it a healthy leech, changing the water in summer once a week, and in winter once a fortnight, and it will most accurately prognosticate the weather. If the weather is to be fine, the leech lies motionless at the bottom of the glass, and coiled together in a spiral form: if rain may be expected, it will creep up to the top of its lodgings, and remain there till the weather is settled: if we are to have wind, it will move through its habitation with amazing swiftness, and seldom goes to rest till it begins to blow hard; if a remarkable storm of thunder or rain is to succeed, it will lodge for some days before almost continually out of water, and discover great uneasiness in violent throes and convulsive-like motions: in frost, as in clear, summer-like weather, it lies constantly at the bottom; and in snow, as in rainy weather, it pitches its dwelling in the very mouth of the phial. The top should be covered over with a piece of muslin.